

HISTORIC CHRISTIANITY  
AND THE  
NEW THEOLOGY

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HAROLD PAUL SLOAN



Class \_\_\_\_\_

Book \_\_\_\_\_

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# Historic Christianity and The New Theology

By

**Harold Paul Sloan, D. D.**

A Pastor in the New Jersey Conference of the Methodist  
Episcopal Church.



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me 1

DEDICATED TO THE COMING  
GENERATION,

In grateful recognition of my great debt  
to parents, teachers and others of a genera-  
tion before, through whose life and tuition I  
was taught the wonder and mystery of  
Christ.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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In offering this volume to the Church the writer wishes in advance to say three things.

First, it is popular among the "liberals" to discredit their critics, and to try and raise dust by classifying all opponents as pre-millennialists. The writer has already been so classified repeatedly. We therefore point out at the outset that pre-millennialism is not to the slightest degree the point of view of these pages. However we want also to say that every Methodist has a right to believe in the premillennial coming of the Savior if he so desires. The defined position of our Church is that Jesus will return to judge both the quick and the dead, and any view of the details of his coming is appropriate in the Methodist Church that is in accordance with this definition. Personally we have never developed a conviction at this point much beyond that which is defined in our standards. Ever since those precious student days under Olin Alfred Curtis at Drew Seminary the doctrines of salvation and of the Trinity have been our eager interest. We have read in Escatology, and concerning the second coming of Jesus, but the details of this expectation have never largely occupied our thinking. We believe, however, that all those who contend for Christian confession should insist simply upon the common Christian confession of the centuries, that Jesus is coming again to judge both the quick and the dead, and

should leave the details of belief here to the free thought of the individual.

Second, in all that we have undertaken to do for the preservation of Methodist and Christian fundamentals we have sought to avoid the legal, the embittered, the radical, the divisive. It ought to be possible to recover our Methodism from its present danger without slowing down its activities or dividing its forces. The present Commission have produced a course of study that clearly violates the constitution of the Church and the law of the last General Conference; yet we would not move to have an Annual Conference set it aside: for such an action would be likely to be divisive. If the next General Conference can change the personnel of the present Commission somewhat, and can find some practical way of making itself the court of last appeal upon this supremely important matter we will have saved the future and can afford to forget the past.

Third, we are deeply aware that this discussion has and will inevitably cause wounds; indeed, we have borne wounds in it ourselves. We must ask from our opponents the charity we gladly extend to them. The days in which we are living are crucial days. Civilization is giving birth to a new era. Two philosophies are in conflict to dominate it. The one is supernatural Historic Christianity. The other is naturalism in many forms. The minds of men are confused. The bounds of science on the one hand and of creed upon the other are not clearly understood. We have been thinking on the surface; we must be forced to think

down in the depths again. During this period of crisis the great Christian foundations of the centuries must be preserved. Free charitable Christian discussion must sift truth from error, and by book and periodical and its directive leadership the Church must lead the thought of the twentieth century to a new devotion to the faith of all the Christian centuries, the faith of Christ, the faith God incarnate gave once for all to men. This is our conviction and our program.

HAROLD PAUL SLOAN.

Bridgeton, N. J.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE SITUATION DEFINED.



HEN a student of philosophy, using as his text books the philosophical writings of Borden P. Bowne, the writer learned the absolute necessity of defining exactly his task before undertaking it. This has become a mental habit with him, and so in opening this discussion of the present-day conflict in Theology we will first of all undertake to locate it and to discover its springs.

In many quarters, where a close analysis of the present controversy has not been made, there is an indefinite feeling that it is all a question of Higher Criticism, and that Higher Criticism is a sort of new infidelity, and that all Higher Critics are infidels. This opinion is very mistaken. Higher Criticism has no necessary relation to the present controversy, and in so far as it has any relation this relationship stands as a symptom rather than as the cause of the modern confusion.

Higher Criticism need not be destructive of Christian faith, and it often is not. In itself it is nothing more than a close investigation of the Scripture writings in the light of contemporary history, and of literary qualities. It is a natural and legitimate method of study, though it hard-

ly seems to be entitled to be called a science, for the subjective element is too large a factor in all of its conclusions. There has been, and there still is, the widest possible differences between the critics both in their pre-suppositions and in their conclusions. A system of thought so variously based, and coming to such divergent results can be called a science only by large accommodation. Some of the critics are bald rationalists who reject everything supernatural, and with it the whole of Historic Christianity. But some of them believe firmly in the supernatural, and fully recognize the supernatural element both in the biblical revelation itself and in sacred history. Dr. James Orr, in his "Problem of the Old Testament," points this out, and he classifies Dr. Driver, of Oxford, among the latter group of critics whose pre-suppositions and conclusions are not destructive of Christian faith. Dr. Orr does not, however, accept Dr. Driver's findings, and he gives his reasons for not doing so.

But here is our point: Higher Criticism, if a science at all, is not an absolute science. The inductive basis for its findings is often even less impressive than the questionnaire inductions of modern Psychology. But science or not, criticism is only incidentally involved in the modern theological conflict; it is anything but the center of the fray. The average preacher can afford to let the critical battle go on, and be unconcerned. Whether there are documents behind the Pentateuch, or whether Isaiah was written

by one prophet or by several, the supernatural cannot be gotten out of the Old Testament. In spite of the worst Criticism can do, the Hebrew Old Testament remains the one fount of ethical monotheism, and in its sublime literature is announced the coming, the suffering, and the glory of Messiah. These two facts fix it forever as a supernatural writing, and nothing but the wilful violence of unbelief can possibly deny them.

It seems to us to be of the utmost importance that this fact should be recognized by every person who is anxious to do or say anything for the preservation of the Faith once for all delivered. It is not Criticism, but the bias of Darwinism in philosophy, and a deep-seated heart attitude of self-assertive self-sufficiency that is the cause of the present controversy.

It is in the name of these things—Darwinism and personal self-sufficiency—that the attack is being made all along the center of the Christian line. Nearly every chief doctrine of the Christian Faith is being denied. There are half a dozen fundamental truths in which Christianity can be summarized for every century from the Apostles to the present time; it will be advantageous to state them. They are:

The Bible: A divine supernatural revelation brought to its climax in Christ through his apostles, which abides the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice.

Depravity: That at the beginning of race history man sinned and fell, and that as a result he is universally abnormal in his mor-

al and spiritual life, capable of being restored only by a supernatural work of God.

The Incarnation: That the Eternal Son of God took on himself human nature in the womb of the Virgin.

The Atonement: That by his death on the cross Jesus achieved forgiveness of sin for all who will believe.

Justification by faith alone: That by a personal and ethical trust in the grace of God at the point of Christ's redeeming work man receives complete salvation; and that salvation is conditioned by such a faith and by nothing else. Good works thus become the fruit, and not the condition of salvation.

Regeneration: A supernatural work of God whereby we are spiritually renewed, and made to feel the reality and glory of the moral and spiritual universe, and of God and of our Savior.

The Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection and the final judgment.

These are the truths that are at stake. The so-called Liberal Christianity denies nearly, if not quite all, of them. In place of them it offers to us nothing but the teachings of Jesus, a mere system of ethical philosophy, the philosophy of love. True, it appreciates Jesus as the first of all teachers, the supreme example of the centuries; but it denies His saviorhood. Many admit His deity, but reject His virgin birth and His bodily resurrection. Of course, their position is utterly untenable, and will certainly develop into Unitarianism, or worse.

The exponents of this creed of unbelief like to make extravagant claims for themselves. They like to claim superior scholarship, and to assert that science supports their positions. One often hears that a man must commit intellectual suicide or else accept the new positions. It is popular among them to speak of the Christian creeds as worn out and antiquated. But such arguments and claims are utterly puerile, no matter how distinguished the person may seem to be who uses them. And the sincere believer can depend upon it that they are simply the shifty resource of weakness. No man who can demonstrate his position by scientific certainties ever hangs it upon a claim of intellectual superiority. There is no fact of science that antagonizes any fundamental belief of Historic Christianity. The Christian believer can clasp hands with the Christian ages before him, and calmly challenge his age to show that his position is intellectually untenable. The only possible reply to his challenge will be sarcasm or boasting, but at this he can afford to smile as a soldier who knows that his enemy is armed only with a cap pistol that simply makes a noise and has no other use.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE COURSE OF STUDY ISSUE.



HIS doctrinal controversy of which we have been speaking is of tremendous significance to the Church: for not only are the very fundamental doctrines of Christianity being denied or superseded, but this is being done within the Church itself, and by its own pledged servants. There are cities in which churches of the same denomination preach at cross purposes with each other. There are churches in which from one pastorate to another there is this same contradiction, and cross-fire of preaching. In the colleges of the Church the professors are divided upon the issue, and in numbers of class-rooms there is teaching destructive to the the very fundamental truths of our faith.

Dr. Samuel Chadwick felt that the matter was sufficiently serious for him to mention it in his address to the recent Methodist Ecumenical in London. He said to the delegates that the Church would never recover its influence over the masses until it recovered faith in its own message. Dr. Paul Lynne, president of a Christian University at Fayette, Mo., made an even stronger statement.

But in the whole situation there is no single condition so fraught with grave menace as the presence of anti-Christian books in the Courses of Study of the Methodist Episcopal Church. That this is not an idle statement but an actual fact we will sufficiently prove later on. At this present moment we want simply to try and measure the gravity of the situation. The Courses of Study provide a theological curriculum for something like a thousand men every year; that is, about a thousand men are annually graduated from these courses. Their influence is consequently vastly greater than that of any theological school in the Church. Their influence is, indeed, many times greater than that of all our theological schools put together. If the rationalistic element can control these courses it is apparent enough that they will also quickly control the preaching emphasis of Methodism; ultimately, they will be able not only to control the preaching emphasis of the Church, but also practically to destroy its doctrinal foundations.

Doubtless some one will want to reply, that they had supposed the new theology differed from Historic Christianity only in that it used different terms to define the same old truths, or, at the most, that it differently interpreted the same great fundamentals. And there are many who have this impression; but it is mistaken. The new theology denies the *whole centre of Historic Christianity*, and leaves of it little beyond the ethics of love.

We would like to ask if it is a mere matter

of terms or interpretation when an author calls in question, or denies both the virgin birth and bodily resurrection of Jesus?

Or, again, is nothing but terms and interpretation involved when Christ's redeeming sacrifice for sin is denied, and the statements of the evangelists that He went up to Jerusalem to accomplish this very thing is made a late and untrustworthy addition to the Gospel narrative?

The great truth of justification by faith is rejected; and a consecration to love and serve God and men, that trusts the general goodness of God to accept our imperfect works and weak purposes, is substituted for it. These two conceptions are a hemisphere apart, both ethically and psychologically. Is such a difference to be passed by as a mere difference in terminology?

The fall of man is denied, as is also any race-wide state of depravity. And for these truths they substitute the dogma of Darwinism, which is not only unsupported by facts, but is actually challenged by them. These two conceptions also are ethically a hemisphere apart.

Again, they have an errant Bible; they do not hesitate to differ even with the Master himself, and that upon major items of his Gospel. This is certainly much more than a difference of interpretation when compared with the Christian faith of the Bible, that it is God's revelation, the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice.

Again, some one may reply: "The one fundamental doctrine of Christianity is the

Deity of Christ; I will not be disturbed as long as this great truth is preserved." But this position is intellectually impossible. Christian doctrine is an organism. You cannot break it up into separate beliefs, and surrender one and keep another; you can no more do this with Christian doctrine than you can with the human body.

The fall of man and depravity is inseparable, for it is the occasion for all the rest; it is the condition that all the rest meets.

Justification by faith is the vital center of Christianity; it is the capstone of the arch. All the other Christian truths head up into this one.

The Incarnation is the link between man lost in the fall and justified in faith; and historically, the Incarnation stands in just this redemptive relation.

Again, the Incarnation is the supernatural climax of a centuries-long movement of supernatural revelation.

Reject depravity and the occasion of the whole is gone. Reject justification and the crowning truth, the supreme purpose of all, is gone. Reject the supernatural revelation and the Incarnation stands isolated in history and incredible. Again, we say, Christian doctrine is an organism, a vital inner unity. It was not manufactured or evolved in human minds, but revealed supernaturally by Almighty God. It is the Faith once for all given to the saints; and man who did not, and could not have conceived it, cannot improve it.

And then, too, we would remind our ra-

tionalistic brethren, who worship the god of change, mistakenly called by the name of "Progress," that Christian doctrine is historically accredited. Christian doctrine is not a theory; it is an historic force. It does not need to boast; it has wrought. At the best the current rationalistic theories that are offered to us as a substitute for the Faith of the ages are but tottering infants without a history or any achievements. Christianity has built a civilization. What have these new theories done? The charitable answer is, nothing: for there are those who would say that the short history of these new theories is written in war, confusion and ruin.

For twenty centuries men have triumphed in life and in death by the faith of Christ, as historically held. There is not a single fact of science against it. There is not a single demonstrated or demonstrable principle of philosophy against it. Darwinism is against it; but Darwinism is a discredited dogma, practically abandoned by the leaders of thought in the exact sciences, both in Europe and America. There is no haste; Christianity is a thing of centuries; there is time for thought, deep thought, long thought, in settling this discussion. Some men may feel that it would be intellectual suicide to remain within the Christian Creeds,—but then superficial thinkers are easily frightened. Decades ago a young student was asked why he was not a Christian, and replied, my intellect will not let me be. The pithy reply of his questioner was,

"Pascal was." And similarly to those brethren who feel they must hasten to get outside the Christian creeds we would reply: James Orr, James Denney, Reinhold Seeberg, Theodore Zahn, John Alfred Faulkner, Olin Alfred Curtis, F. Bettex, E. Dennert, P. T. Forsythe, J. H. Jowett, Robert Rogers, Professor Sheldon and thousands more of the foremost names in the intellectual world are staying in.

But once again, and in conclusion here, we pause to assert that the Course of Study question is the most important single issue in this whole controversy. If a majority of the preachers of Methodism are taught contrary to the established standards of their church and of Historic Christianity while they are taking their theological training, it will be a matter but of a few years before the Church's standards will be completely undermined. The fathers of Methodism built upon the common foundation of the Historic Christian Faith, and to preserve that foundation inviolate, they hedged it about in the constitution of the Church. If erroneous beliefs are to be inculcated among our preachers in the courses of study, the preaching emphasis of the Church will be changed, and the foundations, which our fathers guarded so jealously, will be quickly destroyed.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE PRESENT LAW, AND THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE MATTER OF THE COURSE OF STUDY.



THE present controversy over the Course of Study dates back to the year 1916, although there had already been some dangerous books in the Course before that year.

But before the General Conference of 1916 some brethren thought it would be well to take over the matter of our ministerial education, and some of them met, and to a considerable extent, completed the outline of a Course of Study. This was while the Bishops were still in charge, and while Bishop John W. Hamilton, as chairman of the Episcopal committee, with this interest in charge, was still working upon his report.

The probability is that these brethren brought their ideas to the attention of the General Conference. In any event that body adopted them, the Commission was appointed, and the advance work done before the General Conference by certain brethren became the main outline of the Course of Study as printed in the Discipline of 1916. By the law of 1916 the Bishops were authorized to appoint all the members of the Commission, and were required to examine the books, acting as a board. The courses so provided

and approved became the authorized courses for the Church.

The General Conference of 1920 made several changes in these provisions. Some of them they made at the instance of the Commission itself, which sent an elaborate report to the Committee on Education requesting larger powers. The changes requested by the Commission met with general approval both in the sub-committee, the Committee on Education proper and in the General Conference. The powers of the Bishops in connection with the courses were somewhat further reduced, by making the naming of the educational members a function of the Board of Education. There were some brethren who had a question in their minds about this, but it seemed to meet with the general approval, and so, little, if anything was said about it. The other changes were all such as to strengthen and broaden the powers of the Commission, and to make the Conference Courses of Study a more effective educational institution.

The responsibility given to the Board of Bishops, to make a final review of the course, and adopt it before it could be authoritative within the Church, was not an addition by the General Conference of 1920; it was a power left to the Bishops when the Commission law was drafted in 1916. The minority report did seek to strengthen the Bishops' hands by giving them the power of amending the Commission's report. But this provision, which would have strengthened them greatly, was finally surrendered

by the minority leader after the signal victory of the minority group on the floor of the General Conference.

The surrender was made as a means of composing the further differences of the minority and majority groups of the Educational Committee. It seemed that the central contention had been won. The General Conference had made a deliverance affirming the binding authority of the established doctrinal standards, and providing that all books placed upon the Courses of Study must be in full and hearty accord with those standards. It seemed reasonable to suppose that the servants of the General Conference would govern themselves by its laws; and naturally it seemed both wiser and more generous to compose further differences, which were of so much less importance, and save the time of the Conference.

But returning to the provisions of the law as finally adopted by the General Conference of 1920: these strengthened the hands of the Commission, and broadened its authority; reduced the responsibility of the Board of Bishops by giving to the Board of Education the right of naming the educational members of the Commission; but still left to the Bishops the responsibility of finally reviewing and approving the Course.

These provisions were all a part of the majority report, which was cordially accepted by the committee as a whole. In addition to them the minority added two items, namely:

1. It provided that no books should be

given a place on any of the Courses of Study except such as are in full and hearty accord with those doctrines and that outline of faith established in the constitution of the Church.

2. It further provided that John Wesley's standard sermons, and the Discipline, with some special emphasis upon the Articles of Religion, must be included in the Conference Course. (Dis. Par. 210, Section 2).

We want that this whole matter shall be perfectly clear, so we will repeat: The law of the Church as revised in 1920 leaves the responsibility of the Bishops practically as it was fixed by the law of 1916. The powers and responsibilities of the Commission are considerably enlarged and a new provision is inserted requiring that every book in the Courses must be true to the established standards of Methodism.

This new provision puts to silence the opinion whispered before the last General Conference, that Methodism has abandoned its old standards, and that new standards are being developed. If any one believed this before that time, now, in any event, he must surrender his opinion, for the Church has spoken with a decisive voice upon this very matter.

But to return, this is the law under which the Commission provided the present Courses of Study, and the law under which the Bishops have approved them. That the law has not been fulfilled must now be patent to anyone who has examined the facts. Perhaps it is just because it is so patent that

the Commission seems to be unwilling to meet its critics and prefers to resort to evasion and the suppression of the truth. We will not say, but everyone will realize that men do not use pamphlets if they have ready access to papers and reviews, and that when debate is offered and unaccepted there is generally a reason. However, no matter, the facts are coming through and in the long run the Church will settle the discussion.

There is a word aside we would like to say at this point. Some men would argue that if the Course is not standard the Bishops are equally to blame with the Commission. We want to express our dissent from this opinion. There would seem to be some real excuse for the failure of the Bishops to check up the errors of the Commission's work. In the first place, they are men over-burdened with a mass of supervisional responsibility. In the second place, it is a very much easier thing to select out of one's own reading a list of books fit to be the text-books of the Church than it is to criticise intelligently other men's lists, in which many books are likely to be unfamiliar. It is no small matter in the midst of a crowded administrative life to read carefully and critically fifty or so books (this many would be involved in the Conference Course alone); and it is doubtless true that numbers of the Bishops did not have time during the six months that the Courses were before them to do so. The reasonableness of this opinion will be immediately convincing.

Turning from the Bishops to the Commis-

sion the case is far different. But we prefer not to judge. There are many possibilities. With respect to several members of the Commission their own lack of hearty accord with our doctrinal standards has been so openly spoken that there can be no doubt of this attitude. These brethren may have dominated the councils, others may simply have acquiesced. But no matter, we are not fixing responsibility, we are simply trying to get the facts out.

If the Commission selected these books in good faith with the full intention of obedience to the law of the General Conference, we call upon them to come forward and make reply to the criticisms that are being laid against them. We would warn them that evasion and efforts to suppress the truth will not convince the Church that there is nothing in the criticisms. The critics may be mistaken, but they are sincere. As we see it, truths more precious than life are at stake, and we mean to force the facts out. We do not claim any superiority either of knowledge or of judgment; we claim nothing. We have read the books, we have an opinion of their doctrinal worth, we are standing this opinion alongside of that of the members of the Commission, and we will be heard, and the truth will prevail.

As we read those books, it seemed to us that several deny the Atonement in Christ's death, or else set it aside; that several deny or ignore Justification by Faith; that some deal slightly with the fact of the virgin birth, while others slight or set aside the fact

of Jesus' resurrection. Some deny the fall of man and teach the exploded dogma of Darwinian evolution. Some treat haltingly the Christian supernatural, make conscience a product of social evolution and utility, relate prayer and inspiration to up-gushes from the sub-conscious mind. They make the faith of the Incarnation an evolution in the centuries rather than an authoritative teaching of Christ; and not only the apostles but the Savior himself is charged with error by them, and that with respect to a major item of his gospel. All this they do and more, and many of these things are done, not in one of the books, but in several. If these things are not taught and done it ought to be easy for the Commission to meet this criticism in fair, free discussion and show that they are not. And in any event can it be affirmed that books that seem, even to an average Methodist preacher, to teach such destructive ideas are in full and hearty accord with those doctrines, and that outline of faith established in the constitution of the Church? Under the law, a reasonable doubt ought to be enough to set aside a book. The Commission in rejecting, or the Bishops in refusing to approve, are not trying either a man or a book for heresy; they are simply saying that such a book is not suitable as a text-book in Methodism.

When this discussion was begun we favored retaining these interests in the hands of the Board of Bishops. We favored this for two reasons: First, the Bishops are men who have received the approval of a two-

thirds majority of the representatives of the Church, and so it would seem are likely to represent the majority opinion of the Church. Second, the Bishops are practical pastors rather than scientific theologians, and the putting of the Course into their hands, it would seem, would be likely to protect the Church from a too abstract, theoretical and impractical point of view. It must be admitted that there is force in these arguments; but on the other hand it must also be admitted that the educational advantages of a Commission with wider powers and responsibilities are great. The probability is that the Commission idea has come to stay, and that the educational worth of the Conference Course of Study will in the future be even more largely developed. But if this is to be done, some method must be found whereby the Church can get a Commission that will be obedient to its will. Methodism cannot afford to have the majority of its ministers taught the private notions of commissioners instead of the established beliefs of the Methodist Church.

Perhaps the line of progress in this matter would be to require that all changes in the Courses must be published to the Church at large, when submitted to the Board of Bishops? Or, perhaps, to require that they be published a year in advance of the General Conference, and submitted for final approval there? The latter course need not have any insuperable difficulties in its way. There is no need for a wholesale change of text-books every four years, and such

changes as are required could easily be debated in open committee, and if division still appeared there they could even be debated on the floor of the General Conference.

But finally, the Methodist Church is a part of historic Christianity; it is one with the faith of the ages. This position is defined and established in its Articles of Religion and other doctrinal standards. The great majority in the Church are determined to keep Methodism firmly established in this relationship. We are not unconscious of the doctrinal and philosophical currents that are in our day hostile to this position; we are familiar with them; we have considered them; we have rejected them. It is easy to criticise and ridicule the historic creeds and formularies. It is vastly more difficult to put logical and reasonable arguments behind one's criticisms. We have heard many men do the former; we have yet heard few, if any, men do the latter. "Liberal" Theology, so called, is on the whole a mere subjectivity, and it is very often but poorly informed. Much of it rests simply upon Darwinism, which is only a dogma, and a declining dogma at that. If the Liberal Christian offered his subjectivities as what they are, we would respect him; not indeed as a Christian, but as a gentleman with high ethical ideals. But when he offers these things as the inevitable conclusions of his science, the demonstrations of his philosophy, and holds the club of ridicule over the heads of all those who will not bow down, then we can but laugh at the ignorance of this man of boasted learning,

who talks of science, and does not know its limitations, and of philosophy, and cannot analyze between its predictions and its demonstrations. But the issue is on us and must be faced. Evasion, subterfuge and suppression will not work. The critics stand ready to meet the commissioners collectively or individually on any platform of the Church. Our only stipulation is that the conditions be equal and that there be a stenographic record of the discussion. We have faith in the right as God has given us to see the right. Let us have the venture and the Church shall decide.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PRESENT COURSE DOES NOT FULFILL THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW OF THE CHURCH.



HE Course of Study as at present constituted contains twenty-four books to be studied, and twenty-three to be read. Of the books to be studied, seven do not come up to the standard required by the law; and of those to be read, six do not.

The books provided for study that are defective are:

1. New Testament History, by Dr. Rall, of Garrett.
2. The Pupil and the Teacher, by Dr. Weigle.
3. The Graded Sunday School, by Dr. Meyer.
4. History of the Christian Church, by Dr. Walker, professor of Church History at Yale.
5. The Christian Pastor, by the late Dr. Gladden.
6. Introduction to the Study of Sociology, by Dr. Hayes, a professor in Illinois State University.
7. The Five Great Philosophies of Life, by Dr. Hyde, of Bowdoin College.

Not all of these books are to be criticised in equal degree, but we will not stop at this

point with details. The books in the reading courses that are clearly out of accord with our standards, and so do not fulfil the law are:

1. The Main Points, by President Brown of Yale School of Religion.
2. How to Teach Religion, by Professor Betts, of Northwestern.
3. Life of Luther, by President McGiffert, of Union.
4. Studies in Christianity, by Professor Bowne, late of Boston University.
5. Modern Pre-Millennialism, by Professor Rall, of Garrett.
6. Outline of Christian Theology, by Dr. Clarke, late of Colgate.

Here again the measure of failure, and even its character differs widely, but again we will pass by details for the present.

It will be immediately noticed that no books in the critical field are included in these lists. The explanation is that in our judgment no book in the courses is for critical reasons discordant with the constitutional standards of Methodism. There are several books the critical views of which do not appeal to this writer personally. But personal views are in no measure the basis of this criticism. The constitutional standards of Methodism define the headlands of faith as it has obtained in the Church from the beginning. Those headlands of belief are adequate to determine the essential Christian quality of any man's thought. Beyond this general outline is the sphere of private judgment. In these matters men can differ

and remain properly Christian thinkers. Doubtless in this sphere of private judgment opinions will be proposed, that, when they have been developed and correllated will be found to be out of accord with the fixed headlands of Historic Christianity. When this appears, then these opinions must be surrendered.

One of the things our times needs to discover is how to relate liberty and orderliness. It is quite possible our earth is every day moving through spaces never traversed by it before, that it is every day exploring new vastnesses; yet its relation to the sun is constant. And is not this the analogy of our Christian faith of God Incarnate? Our relation to him, as fallen, lost men, whom he has redeemed by the Atonement of his cross; to whom we are united by faith and the inworking of his supernatural powers; whose salvation is forever a relationship of justification from the guilt of sin through his finished work,—this relationship is constant. This is the gospel he gave us through the apostles. This relationship, and those several truths that define it must be constant. An opinion that sacrifices this central relation, or any of the truths that define and secure it is not Christianity, and cannot honestly be called by its name. In this body of faith the Bible must be preserved as God's supernatural revelation, and a conception of that revelation must be held that secures the Messianic hope and all its great moral, spiritual and redemptive values; but the mechanics, if we might so speak, of this great

revelational movement may be variously conceived. Personally, we do not for a moment accept Dr. Smyth's view of the Old Testament, and we feel that we have a right even as a layman, to dissent from it, for there are men of great scholarship who severely criticise it; but it is not clear that his view sacrifices supernatural revelation, or does violence to any definition of our established standards; therefore we pass this book by as one which diverges from older views not, seemingly, upon essentials, but in the undefined spheres of opinion.

However, we do think that the Commission showed narrowness in putting into the course no book expressive of the older opinions in Old Testament Criticism. Truth is not to be determined by counting heads. Philosophical currents often determine the thinking of an age; and it often happens that it is the few who resist and are right, while the many fall in line and are wrong. On matters left indeterminate by our standards of faith we should have all opinions. On matters determined by our standards we should have only opinions in harmony with those standards.

One other matter at this point: It is doubtless true that the dogma of Darwinism has very largely influenced the modern critical view of the Old Testament, and it is also doubtless true that this dogma is rapidly losing its former influence. In the domain of exact science it is almost, if not quite, a lost cause. After awhile when the collapse of this opinion is more fully realized there will

probably be a considerable change in critical opinions. Again we express the judgment, voiced earlier, that the subjective element is so large in critical matters that the study is hardly entitled to be called a science. But if it is kept free from the anti-supernatural and anti-Christian philosophical bias it does not seem to us that its theories with respect to the mechanics of the revelational process are a proper subject for credal definition or legislative consideration.

But turning just for a moment again to the thirteen books, which do not seem to us to fulfill the law of the Church as so exactly defined at Des Moines:

Dr. Rall's New Testament History rejects the central fact of the New Testament, our Lord's clear redemptive purpose; and reduces the Fourth Gospel to a non-apostolic writing embodying traditions, and the doctrinal influences of St. Paul's thought.

The books on Christian Nurture by the editors of our Sunday School publications, Dr. Luther Weigle, and Dr. George Betts, are all useful in their field, but they each fail in the same respect. They assume that Christian character can be humanly built entirely apart from a justifying faith in Christ at the point of redemption, and from a supernatural regenerative work. Certainly they all believe in divine help through prayer, but this help concerns divine assistance in matters of ethical detail, rather than a supernatural regenerating work whereby the losses of the fall are made good.

Dr. Walker's volume of Church History is

openly hostile to Historic Christianity. The very fundamental doctrines of our Faith are made products of evolution in the centuries rather than the gifts to us of Christ through his apostles. The Deity and pre-existence of Christ is among the doctrines so evolved, according to his opinion. His book has also a strong naturalistic bias. This bias doubtless has been largely influential in determining his opinions.

Dr. Hyde's book presents a similar opinion of Christianity. He is openly hostile to the historic conception of it, he is bitter in his criticism of our common creeds. His book seeks to reduce Christianity to the ethics of love, a conception as remote from Historic Christianity as Judaism is.

Dr. Hayes in his volume on Sociology assumes the naturalistic and Darwinian point of view. He passes off his own imaginations for scientific certainties, reduces conscience to a mere unauthoritative product of social evolution, a resultant of man's self-seeking instincts as modified by social relationships. His point of view is antagonistic to Historic Christianity.

Dr. Gladden's book is written from the standpoint of the "New Theology." Its expressions of it are only incidental. Apart from this defect it is a great volume.

The Main Points, by Dr. Brown, of Yale, is a statement of the familiar New Theological position. It denies the objective Atonement of the cross, and substitutes salvation by faith in the fatherhood of God for justification by faith in the propitiatory work of

God in Christ; and both ethically and psychologically these two conceptions are a universe apart. Dr. Brown's position is one of these impossible mediating positions that sometimes develop. His disciples will be compelled to follow his negation on into Unitarianism, or else to react toward Historic Christianity. Justification by faith is the vital centre of the Christian faith as Luther pointed out. The rejection of this doctrine will in the long run be fatal to every distinctively Christian item of a man's thinking.

Dr. McGiffert's life of Luther is written from Dr. McGiffert's own hostile point of view. His antagonism to the Reformation attitude toward the Bible prevents him from appreciating even its creative power in history.

Bowne's "Studies in Christianity," express the same general views as Brown's, "The Main Points," mentioned above. It departs radically from the very central truths of Christianity.

Professor Rall's second volume in the course, his "Modern Pre-Millennialism and the Christian Hope," is more baldly destructive than his former work. In this volume he goes so far as to charge the apostles, and even the Master with error, and that with respect to a major item both in their teaching and in his. If the Church should follow Dr. Rall in doubting and correcting its Lord, one can easily see that the time will speedily come when his authority will be surrendered as rationalistic theology has

surrendered every other authority, and when the Christian Church will become an anarchy both of belief and of life. We do not believe that this will result, however, for we do not believe that Professor Rall can persuade the Church to substitute his opinions for the positive declarations of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The "Outline of Christian Theology," by William Newton Clarke, is the recognized text-book of a more moderate form of the New Theology. The book is very much less developed in its radical and rationalistic thought than such a book as President Hyde's or Professor Walker's. Nevertheless Dr. Clarke's book is halting on the Bible, reduces the Atonement to a mere moral influence, rejects Justification by Faith and other fundamental Christian items of belief.

This rapid survey of the thirteen books in the new Conference Course of Study, which set forth views divergent from, or hostile to, those defined in the constitution of the Methodist Church, concludes our initial observations. We would like, however, in closing to propose this question: Can the Church, having put these volumes into the hands of young ministers just beginning their theological training, have any reason to expect that at the end of their training they will cherish a robust faith in those sublime doctrines of Historic Christianity and of Methodism, which are defined and established in our constitution, and to which we will then pledge them?

We turn now to these books in detail. We

will begin this fuller criticism of them with President Hyde's volume, which, as reducing Christianity to the mere ethics of love, would well represent that type of assault upon Christianity, which Professor A. S. Peake says, is the most dangerous form of the modern attack upon our Holy Religion.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE FIVE GREAT PHILOSOPHIES OF LIFE.

*By William DeWitte Hyde, Pres. of Bowdoin College.*



RESIDENT Hyde's book is divided into five chapters, devoted, one each, to what he holds to be the five great philosophies of life. These five philosophies are: The Epicurean Pursuit of Pleasure, Stoic Self-Control by Law, The Platonic Subordination of Lower to Higher, The Aristotelian Sense of Proportion, The Christian Spirit of Love. The very plan of the book should put the thorough Christian thinker upon his guard, for Christianity is not a philosophy, it is much more than a philosophy, it has a philosophy. Certainly it would be possible to take that philosophical truth, or better, those philosophical truths that are strongly emphasized in Christianity, and compare them with other systems. But in doing this the Christian thinker must be careful to distinguish between these principles and the whole of Christianity which includes in addition a tremendous historical personality, and an equally sublime supernatural spiritual dynamic. Indeed, so intimate is the relationship between the historical, the dynamic, and the philosophical elements of Christianity that it may be ques-

tioned whether the separate discussion of its ethical philosophy can be very illuminating.

In a personal conversation in London, recently, Professor Peake, of Manchester College, England, was discussing modern currents of thought and belief; and among other subjects this very matter of reducing Christianity to a mere ethical system was mentioned. He said that he looked upon this as the most dangerous and destructive form of the modern assault upon Christianity. He went further, pointing out that the historical element was essential to Christianity, and asserting that he believed a sufficient and dependable historical residue would be left after Criticism had done its worst. Personally, we do not accept the critical findings as they are given in Professor Peake's new Commentary, but it is most interesting to find a professor who, though going a large part of the way with modern Criticism, yet defends the historical and supernatural elements in Christianity.

In Historic Christianity we have a tremendous historical movement coming to its climax in a great supernatural Incarnation. God became man by the womb of the Virgin. As Incarnate He died and rose again, making atonement for human sin. And salvation, during all the Christian centuries, Protestant and Catholic, has ever been through a personal relationship to this atoning work, and risen almighty life. This is the Christianity of the creeds. This is the Christianity of the hymns. This is the Christianity of

the Bible. To drop this out of sight, and reduce Christianity to the ethics of love is not only to make it something other than it has ever been before, but it is also to emasculate it, and leave it as helpless to uplift the fallen human race as any of the other great systems of philosophy.

The Christianity of this volume by Professor Hyde which we are discussing is of just such an emasculated type. He does not treat the ethic of love as one great Christian element; he reduces the whole of Christianity to this one idea. Some of his references to the great Christian creeds are openly hostile. He represents them as winding sheets in which simple Christianity—his philosophy of love—has been buried.

A few citations at this point will make his attitude in this relation abundantly clear. Thus on page 290 he writes:

“Even the Christian Spirit of Love takes time to work its moral transformation. The tendency of it, however, is steady and strong in the right direction; and in due time it will conquer the heart and control the action of any man who . . . . maintains this conscious relationship to that love at the heart of things which most of us call God.” He then continues, speaking of Jesus as one among those who had the spiritual insight to see these things, and concludes by saying: “Christianity of this simple, vital sort is the world’s salvation.”

Manifestly the author is referring here, when he speaks of Christianity of this simple, vital sort, to the ethic of love which is

the theme of his chapter, and the particular theme of the paragraph above to which the relative refers back. It is the philosophy of love that is to save the world. It is immediately after this statement that his most baldly hostile paragraph against Historic Christianity and the great Christian Creeds is located. He says:

“Christianity of this simple, vital sort is the world’s salvation. Criticised by enemies and caricatured by friends; fossilized in the minds of the aged, and forced on the tongues of the immature; mingled with all manner of exploded superstition, false philosophy, science that is not so, and history that never happened; obscured under absurd rites; buried in incredible creeds; professed by hypocrites; discredited by sentimentalists; evaporated by mystics; stereotyped by literalists; monopolized by sacerdotals; it has lived in spite of all the grave-clothes its unbelieving disciples have tried to wrap around it, and holds the keys of eternal life.”

It would be idle to pretend that these words were penned by a devoted believer and lover of the Faith once for all delivered. His paragraph is lacking even in a fine ethical sensitiveness for the feelings of others to whom beliefs and institutions that he indiscriminately holds up to ridicule are still precious. To speak of Christianity as fossilized in the minds of the aged; mingled with all manner of exploded superstitions, false philosophy, science that is not so, and history that never happened; as being buried in

incredible creeds; and discredited by sentimentalists, is to manifest a temper of reckless hostility; it is certainly one very far removed from friendliness.

After a little we want to come back again to President Hyde's attitude toward the great credal statements of our historic faith; but before we do this let us examine a few more paragraphs that it may be perfectly clear that he is seeking to reduce Christianity to a mere system of philosophical ethics. Thus on page 278 he is discussing the failure of the various philosophical systems, and concludes by saying: "And consequently these systems fail to work, except with a few highly altruistic souls who need no spiritual physician."

(Notice the involved rejection of the fall and universal depravity of man in this statement that there are certain persons so naturally good that they need no physician.) Then having pointed out their common failure he goes on to show that Christianity succeeds where they failed, and he locates this superior power of Christianity in the influence of Christ's teaching and example. He writes: "He certainly did love all men, and care for their happiness as dearly as He cared for His own. But this same Christ is the Christian's Lord and Master and Friend. Yet friendship for Him, the acceptance of Him as Lord and Master, is a contradiction in terms unless one is at the same time willing to cultivate His Spirit, which is the spirit of service, the spirit which holds the happiness and welfare of others just as sa-

cred and precious as one's own. He that hath not this spirit of Christ is none of His." In a sentence, if we are going to be friends of Jesus we must accept His philosophical principles and try to work them out in our lives. But this little ethical imitation of Jesus of which the author speaks here is paltry alongside of that powerful mysticism which was in the mind of St. Paul when he penned the same words. For the author Christ is at the most the Teacher and Master, but for the Christian centuries He has ever been Redeemer, Savior—All-in-all.

One other illustration of this same point of view. On page 258 the author writes: "Love will not grow in our hearts without deep unseen communion with the Spirit of Love who is God. To dwell reverently on the Infinite Love; to keep in one's heart a sacred place where His holy name is adored; to eagerly seek for Love's coming in our hearts, in the hearts of all men, and in all the affairs of the world; to gratefully receive all material blessings as gifts for use in Love's service; to beseech for ourselves and bestow on others that forgiveness which is Love's attitude toward our human frailties and failings; to fortify ourselves in advance against the allurements of sense, and the base desire to gain good for ourselves at cost of evil to others; to remember that all right rule, all true strength, all worthy honour inhere in and flow from Love, and Love's Father, God,—to do this day by day sincerely and simply without formality or ostentation—this is to pray and to insure prayer's inevi-

table answer—a life through which Love freely flows to bless both the world and ourselves."

Here once again is Christianity reduced to the ethic of love. Christianity without the Savior's name or office. Christianity without the Atonement, without justifying faith, without a supernatural work of regeneration. All these great Christian realities are to be replaced by a lifelong effort to commune with Love and Love's Father, God, and to realize Love in one's day-by-day living.

If this idea of abstract ethics, or this idea as clothed and illustrated in Jesus the supreme ethical teacher and life, is all there is to Christianity, we would like to ask why this idea has been uniformly ineffective and the other, that represented by the Christian creeds, has been uniformly effective? The Roman emperors Titus and Aurelius both taught, and, as best they could, exemplified the doctrine of love. But their influence amounted to nothing for the world. There was more real altruism in the religion of Israel than the modern "liberal" would care to admit; and modern Unitarianism is pledged to just this doctrine of love, the very thing the author is writing about; yet both of these systems have failed. The Unitarian Church is smaller today than when it was organized, and in the same time the credal Churches have grown more than a hundred-fold. If the author is correct, if the creeds have been the winding sheets that have cramped the Gospel, as he says, then we must come to this conclusion, that error

works better than truth: for manifestly the items that he sets aside, the historical and supernatural, are the very items that have made Christianity a powerful factor in our civilization. We have a Christian civilization, and a catholic Christian Church today just because, true or false, the author's ideas have never gotten a hold upon the minds of men. And, if we are to judge by history, moral and spiritual decline is our only outlook should these ideas undermine the faith of the people in credal Christianity, today.

But turning, now, to our author's attitude toward the historic creeds of the Church. On page 242 he writes: "The most sensitively honest men will more and more decline to enter the service of the Church, until subscription to antiquated formulas, long since become incredible to the majority of well trained scholars, ceases to be required either literally, or 'for substance of doctrine.'" No man who is in sympathy with Historic Christianity will refer to its great credal expressions as "antiquated formulas long since become incredible to the majority of well trained scholars." Nor can we forbear to record our amusement at this constantly recurring boast of the "liberals," that they have cornered the brains of the world. These men who are so rebellious against the authority of the Bible are forever insisting on the authority of the so-called scholarly consensus. Of course, they insist both on determining which noses are to be counted in making up the consensus,

and in doing the counting. And perhaps this is very well for them, but we wonder if they will ever get sufficiently altruistic in their point of view to realize that for the rest of us the new authority is quite as objective as the Bible was, and vastly less satisfying. If we must say, verily verily thus saith, from the point of view of ninety-nine percent of us, it is more satisfying to add, "the Lord," than "the liberals." But no matter, go on brothers, the rest of us have become accustomed to your humble boasting, and it has lost its impressiveness. To tell you the blunt truth, we have so often found that there was behind it neither facts of science nor searching philosophical analysis that we have come to look upon it as something used in lieu of these.

But to return to our author. A little further down on the same page he demands that the "timid and conservative modern adherents" of Christianity should allow to the Christian system the same freedom for intellectual development that is characteristic of other philosophical systems. But, we remark, is he ignorant of the fact that Christianity is the truth of God incarnate? Do our "liberal" friends desire to correct and improve even the Gospel of the Son of God? Christianity is not a philosophical nucleus, given to men by one Rabbi Jesus. It is the Gospel of supernatural salvation brought to men by God made manifest in the flesh. If this has come to us it cannot be improved upon. Is it not a defect of our times, that we are so enamored of our selves,

our science and our progress that we have no heart left to wonder even at the Incarnation and the Cross? We and our progress are so wonderful to ourselves that we cannot sit at the feet of Incarnate Deity even, if he happened to have come to an earlier century. No, our age must improve everything, or reject it; and we must even improve the Gospel of redemption which the Infinite himself wrought and gave to us while he was manifest among us in flesh.

This intolerance of the creeds, this insistence upon intellectual freedom, as of disciples with the intellectual opinions of an earthly master, both of these ideas mark the author as one whose point of view is remote from Historic Christianity. A Christian, as historically understood, is one who is in believing contact with the redeeming work and dynamic personality of Jesus, and consequently a certain credal minimum is necessary both as a qualification for ministerial office and for membership in the Christian body. But we pass on.

Still in the same paragraph the author charges that the Church is lacking in intellectual honesty, and that in this respect it compares unfavorably with the natural sciences. We would reply that this charge is both puerile and offensive. Does not the author know that personal bias is an inevitable part of all intellectual activity? Does he not know that science has its dogmas as well as religion, and that they are as tenaciously held in the former as in the latter? Does he not know that many a scientific dogma has

been held in the face of facts? Does he not know that Darwinism, the very foundation and cornerstone of the "liberal" movement, is now being held, by those who still hold it, in the face of facts? Does he not know these things, and does he not know in addition that his own "liberal" allies are in what would seem to be a rather compromised position, as men who have subscribed to creeds they do not believe, and who are taking upon themselves responsibilities they do not intend to meet?

But more fundamentally the intellectual appeal is not the only criterion of truth. The appeal to the heart and conscience is also a legitimate test. Certainly, to say the least, it is just as intellectually honest for the Church to refuse to surrender some precious item of Christian belief when some uncertain scientific opinion has challenged it, as it is for the scientist to refuse to surrender some scientific theory when it is challenged by some newly discovered facts. Thus, the consensus of so-called scholarly opinion may be against the resurrection of Jesus, but the Church has tremendous reasons for holding this truth. In the first place scholarly opinion can allege nothing against it but a personal bias of naturalism, and apart from this bias the resurrection is so well attested that no capable mind would for a moment call it in question. But in addition, the Church finds in the resurrection tremendous moral and heart values. If Darwinism has been suffered to live in the scientific world without any foun-

dation in fact, and in the face of accumulating evidence against it, just because it is valuable as a means of helping the mind to construe the complexity of the present-day universe—if Darwinism, we say, has been suffered in the scientific world for such a reason, shall the Church be charged with insincerity or intellectual dishonesty because it does not surrender some precious value of its Gospel at the instance of its modern critics?

It is high time that men who boast of their intellectual attainments begin to think thoroughly. The current assault upon Historic Christianity and its creeds does not arise in any facts of science, or in any sure analysis of philosophy. It arises wholly in a personal bias of unbelief. A future generation will call it by its proper name, infidelity. The dogma of Darwinism, and its related conception, naturalism, is the foundation upon which the so-called “liberal” current in modern thought is resting. Neither of these ideas is either proved or provable. As a fact Darwinism is about surrendered in scientific circles, though some of the “well trained scholars” do not seem to know this. But resting upon these two assumptions a superstructure of belief intensely hostile to Historic Christianity has been erected. It is boastful as Deism was boastful, in its day. It loudly threatens to discredit and destroy credal Christianity as Deism did. When the Church understands this new age current clearly enough to call it by its proper name, and to refuse it unqualifiedly, there will be an end of it.

But in conclusion: a book that holds up to bitter ridicule the credal forms and historic beliefs and institutions of Christianity, that demands intellectual freedom to develop and alter the truths of Christ such as is given to the teachers of human philosophies, a book that charges religion with intellectual dishonesty and that compares it unfavorably in this respect with modern science, a book that pares away the whole rich historical and supernatural content of Christianity reducing it to the mere ethic of love—such a book is not adapted to be a text-book for the training of ministers, whatever may be its other excellences. It certainly comes very far from being in full and hearty accord with the credal foundations of Historic Christianity. We are glad to record our appreciation of many excellences in the book. If it had been written on a frankly Unitarian basis, we would have no particular criticism of it, other than to point out its utter inadequacy to meet the sin problem of the world. But as using the Christian name, as intolerantly criticising true Christianity, as being offered as a text-book for the inculcation of Historic Christianity—upon this foundation the book would seem to us to be utterly impossible.

## CHAPTER VI.

### STUDIES IN CHRISTIANITY BY BORDEN P. BOWNE.



THE attitude of mind that we insist upon for ourselves in all this theological discussion, and that we are anxious to give expression to early in this series of critical reviews is that of Christian charity. For this reason we are placing the review of Professor Bowne's book among the first, since our personal affection for him as a philosophical thinker, and our belief in him as a Christian heart will make it both fitting and necessary that we should distinguish Bowne's Christian personality from his defective book, and his strength as a philosopher from his weakness as a theologian.

Here are three propositions that careful thought will show to be true. We will not seek to prove them, but will simply set them down. First, a man may hold right heart attitudes on the basis of defective opinions. The opposite is also possible. Nevertheless, right opinions are a great aid to right heart attitudes. Indeed, for the social body as a whole, and in the long run, opinions will determine heart attitudes; it is the individual alone who finds some large measure of separation between these two. It is on the basis of these facts that we would give the judg-

ment that the Church can afford to be very tolerant of defective opinions in private life, but must insist upon its established standards in every teaching office.

Second, the Christian theologian must have one qualification in addition to those which are required for the philosopher, he must have a robust faith in the Christian Bible, it must stand to him as the sufficient rule both of faith and practice. The Christian theologian has thus a considerable body of truth in addition to those intuitions of the mind which he shares with the philosopher. And this larger body of truth of the theologian is not verifiable in the intuitions of the mind. The heart and conscience give it some confirmation, certainly, but the heart and conscience are both abnormal through sin, so that their reaction is of questionable authority. We would put it this way: The heart and conscience as energized and elevated by some deep experience will confirm the Biblical revelation. And this judgment of the elevated and ennobled conscience, when regarded broadly through the years adequately establish the authority of the Christian's Bible. We would pause here long enough to point out that faith has here an objective authority that it can unhesitatingly pass on from generation to generation as the standard of truth and duty. And that while this standard is not subject to the vagaries of individual subjectivities, it is nevertheless being ever anew confirmed by the elevated consciousness of the Christian community.

And third, if a philosopher, whose opinion

was halting at the point of the Christian's Bible, should undertake to write theology, we would expect to find him cutting off the highest peaks of Christian truth, and settling back toward the ethical monotheism of Israel.

These three propositions, which we offer without discussion are the basis for our own understanding of the problem of Professor Bowne's Christian heart, magnificent intellect, and divergent opinions. Bowne has a halting attitude toward the Bible, and consequently his thinking is defective from the Christian point of view by the loss of the biblical contribution. He keeps the essential deity of Christ because his own heart is so entwined here that he will not let his intellectualism sacrifice it. But he constructs a system of belief in which this unique and sublime figure has no place. He reduces Christianity to a body of theistic ethics in which Christ stands simply as the supreme teacher and example. He has no stupendous atoning sacrifice, no all-sufficient redemption; he has nothing beyond Judaism except the Sermon on the Mount and the example of Jesus.

Doubtless the question will be in some one's mind, how then does it happen that Professor Bowne was acquitted of heresy charges before the New York East Conference? We make this answer: It is one thing to say that a teacher is heretical, and another to say that a certain book from his pen comes decidedly short of being in harmony with Methodist standards. It was

Bowne, not his book, that was on trial then, and if Bowne, as it is reported that he did, professed belief in our established standards this profession was his sufficient defense. But not to spend any more time with these secondary matters, let us turn to the book itself.

First, with respect to the Bible. Bowne writes on pages 24, 25, "The great significance of the Christian revelation, then, does not lie in its contribution to ethics or to speculative theology, though it has done something in both of these realms; but rather in this, that back of the mystery and uncertainty of our own lives, . . . it reveals God, the almighty friend and lover of men." The meaning of this passage, as any reader familiar with the whole current of Bowne's thinking will see, is that the Bible is a divine revelation only in its great main movement rather than in all its ethical and doctrinal details. He says exactly this on page 40, where after repudiating the idea that the Bible is infallible in detail, or even in every detail of its conception of God, he goes on and affirms that the biblical "revelation consists in what we have learned concerning God, his character, and his purposes; and that revelation is mainly made by a great historical movement. Of this movement the Bible is at once the product and the historical and literary record. The truth of the revelation depends on the general truth of the history, and not at all on the infallibility of the record." And similarly, again, on page 44: "Christianity does not affirm an infalli-

ble Bible, but a self-revealing God. It holds that God was in the historical movement out of which the Bible came, and in it in such a way that out of it we have won a supremely valuable knowledge of God. Whatever else was or was not there God was there guiding the movement for His own self-revelation. This is the true and the only Christian faith in this matter."

The Bible then, for Bowne, is scarcely, if anything more than a comparatively accurate record of the divine providences that have over-ruled in the world's history. And these providences are brought about not by extraordinary divine revelations through common men so much as by ordinary revelations through men of genius. On page 83 Bowne speaks of the liberal opinion which says the "Bible is no revelation by God to man but a revelation by man to man," and criticizes it in this way: "God is no longer so easily ruled out by a verbal antithesis. . . In the human world God is less a with-worker than a through-worker, but he works nevertheless to will and to work of his own good pleasure."

This opinion would seem to reduce revelation about to the work of human genius in interpreting God. We say, about, for Bowne does not say that God never is a with-worker, but that he is less a with- than a through-worker, and on page 81 he does speak of the Holy Spirit as working on the minds and hearts of holy men. But on page 80 he definitely rejects "the old view of the Bible," as an opinion discarded and disproved; nor can

one without assuming a colossal ignorance on Bowne's part apply this remark to the verbal inspiration theory exclusively. Verbal inspiration is one out of several theories that the Church has offered to explain its doctrine that the Bible is the only and sufficient rule both of faith and practice. The view that the Bible is the absolute standard of moral and religious truth is the view that Bowne, if he was intelligent, was referring to.

But finally, at this point, we would call attention to the fact that on page 81 Bowne tells us that the men through whom the divine revelation came did not understand it. We quote his words: "We see that it was conditioned by the imperfections of the men to whom it came. They did not understand it. They had no such conception of the divine meaning as we possess. God is the great exegete, and he makes clear now what he meant then, but the men in the midst of the process had no clear vision." Now, had the author been an exponent of any form of a fully supernatural divine revelation this passage would not have been significant. But we protest, that when men speak only by natural power, when they speak only that which they understand of God that in so far as they did not understand Him they misrepresented Him. If a prophet was the mouthpiece for the divine intelligence, then he might be said to understand only partly, or even not at all, and yet his message have remained truth; but when men of natural insight speak what they do

not understand about God and His purposes they speak what is not so. The author's theory of the Bible reduces it to a patch-work of truth and error, that must set up the individual soul to separate for itself the one from the other.

The errancy, which Bowne thus gets into his Bible he uses constantly in his other chapters: for he rejects the biblical conception of sin, of atonement in the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, of justification by faith, and other great Christian truths. Indeed Bowne is, as Professor Faulkner points out in his book, "Modernism and the Christian Faith," a strong "liberal."

With respect to sin the author is an evolutionist. Man sins, because the animal in him is as yet not outgrown. And God's attitude is not one of burning condemnation that can only forgive through a tremendous act of self-propitiation, but is rather one of complacent tolerance. He knows that man must pass through these mistakes in coming up to higher and nobler spiritual levels. The biblical idea that sin is not only an act of the will but a deep nature, a universal depravity he rejects as a fiction. His own words will make his position fully clear.

His evolutionary position comes out on page 145. "Our development," he says, "begins on a submoral plane. That was not first which was spiritual, but that which was animal. . . . Whatever may have been true of the first man, this word of Paul's is true of his descendants; and the reported performances of even the first man would not seem

to set him very high in the scale of development. By consequence, sin itself in many of its aspects is a relic of the animal not yet outgrown, a result of the mechanism of appetite and impulse and reflex action for which the proper inhibitions are not yet developed; and only slowly does it grow into the consciousness of itself as evil."

Our great professor, and we use the description sincerely, had evidently thought little about sin, and had studied but superficially the profound biblical teaching concerning it. Even the Genesis account, which Bowne thinks is rather primitive, is profound compared with his thinking here. In Genesis it is clear that the genius of the first temptation was not physical but spiritual. It was chiefly because the fruit of the tree was desirable to make wise, because it would make man self-sufficient in wisdom, because it would gratify his desire for self-exaltation even to equality with God, that he chose it. The problem of sin is scarcely animal at all. It is largely spiritual. The real motive of sin is utterly beyond the beast. It is man's sense of self, his towering consciousness of self blinding him to all beside that is the spring of his sin. That he expresses this spirit of self-intoxication in physical excess is but incidental; it is the unbalanced sense of self that is the power of evil in him.

But we move on. On page 220-221, Bowne expresses his view of God's easy tolerance of sin, thus: "They are (that is men are) to pass from the unconsciousness of nature and the ignorance of childhood to the conscious

recognition and acceptance of the divine will; and then they are to go on with God in deepening sympathy and growing fellowship forever. This is God's eternal thought for men, and it is not modified in any way in its essential nature by the fact of sin. Of course much of what we call sin is error and mistake, arising from the ignorance of men who have to feel their way. And sin itself, as we find it among men, is largely the wilfulness of freedom which has not learned self-control, rather than any deliberate choice of evil. Ignorance and untrained wilfulness abound, and both alike must be removed, or they will increase, and lead to disaster. . . . But during the process we must not indulge in extravagant condemnation by bringing in the categories of abstract theological ethics." One is moved to compare this with Paul's conception, in Romans, of God giving man up to the reprobate mind, and of His forgiving sin, either before or since Christ, only with a view to his supreme atoning work; or with the Savior's own burning denunciation of sin, and his conception that his death was a ransom for many. But doubtless, Bowne would regard these ideas as a part of the dross of human mistake, with which the pure gold of God's fatherly love was mixed in the revelational process. The familiar way of getting rid of these ideas is to make them corruptions, either by Jewish or Roman conceptions, of the sublime truth of God's perfect fatherly love which not even the apostles had yet seen, and which, if Jesus taught it, they afterward corrupted with

these additions. But we must move on from the author's conception of sin, and set forth his view of salvation.

Bowne has no smallest appreciation of the Christian truth that Christ died to make atonement for man's sin. To him this view is utterly artificial. Now anyone who has done any deep thinking at this point can easily understand Bowne. He came up against the surface difficulties of the Christian view, and did not have a sufficiently robust faith in the Bible to hold him steady until he worked deeper. It sounds very reasonable to say that the Father's love needed no atonement, and that God forgives as a human father would, and that God needed not to be reconciled to sinners, never having felt estrangement. But these statements are all on the surface, and they do not touch the deeper realities of moral order in which the Bible moves. But from the beginning, this doctrine of propitiation and atonement has been preached as the very central doctrine of Christianity. Every great epoch in the Church's life has seen this truth supremely emphasized. The Reformation and the Wesleyan revival both alike put supreme stress here. Is it likely that the centuries as well as the Bible are mistaken? Is it not wonderful that this so-called error has been supremely fruitful in Christian history? But this is exactly the position we are forced into by Bowne and the other liberals.

There is a sentence on page 160 that makes his position indubitably clear. He says: "How then are the sins of the world to be

taken away? This question in a forensic sense we dismiss altogether as being fictitious."

Similarly on page 162 he says the same: "The Redeemer's work . . . was not a fictitious haggling with abstract and fictitious justice. It was Infinite Love going forth to seek and to save the lost. It was the father of the prodigal going in search of his boy. It was the Good Shepherd giving His life for the sheep; not of course at the demand of justice, but at the instance of divine love. This is the true vicariousness of love, of sympathy, of the living moral reason, not an abstract and fictitious vicariousness which no one can understand or find any place for in an unsophisticated conscience." Of course, the author uses offensive language to discredit the view he is rejecting. But such ugly words as "haggling," and "fictitious justice" cannot blind the careful thinker to the fact that Bowne is throwing away the biblical truth that Christ made atonement, satisfaction, propitiation, expiation for the guilt of our sin,—and we would point out that these are New Testament words.

But to continue, the author goes on, and interprets still further the work of Christ as God's sympathetic suffering with man. But notice that the suffering is always something that is incidental to His effort to win men from sin. It is not a moral end divinely purposed and borne on our behalf. "There is no provision made. . . . for letting sinners off," says Bowne. Later he asks, "And is this all there is in the atonement?" And

answers: "In reply, we say we no longer care to use the word atonement, as it has become misleading or uncertain through long association with doubtful theological theories."

One further reference at this point of redemption. He says on page 228: "Conversion, then, is a turning from the wrong road into the right one. It is not to be understood in . . . a theological sense, as implying some difficult forensic adjustment in the courts of heaven whereby the antithesis of justice and mercy is happily mediated."

In the light of these passages it is useless to deny that Bowne was utterly out of sympathy with the Christian doctrine of propitiation in the cross of Jesus, and its complementary truth, justification by faith. Indeed his constant caricaturing of them would seem to suggest that he had never given to them any deep and thoughtful attention.

But no matter, in spite of our professor and his really great learning these truths stand and will stand. The second of our Methodist Articles of Religion defines Christ's work as that of reconciling His Father to us, and the twentieth defines His cross as a redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all sin, both original and actual, and every other branch of the Christian Church has its similar formulations.

But once again to the author—his view of the new birth is about as halting as those we have examined. Here are a few passages:

On page 231 he says: "The importance of

conversion in the Christian sense of the term cannot be overestimated. But the popular thought is not Christian. For it the test of conversion is about this: Have they had some rhapsodic experience or some great emotional rapture? Have strange and extraordinary psychological events taken place in their consciousness? If not, then they may be 'moral,' but they are not converted. Probably even yet many churches could be found where the serious purpose to lead a religious life in reverent dependence on God for help would be a far more doubtful proof of conversion than would be furnished by some emotional ecstasy."

Again on page 233 is this: "The emphasis on conversion as a turning toward God on the part of those who are turned away from him in lives of wickedness cannot be overdone; but the emphasis on conversion as a special emotional experience with striking psychological attendants is illiteracy both Scriptural and religious."

We give two other illustrations of his point of view. The first is on page 255. "Love itself abides in the will rather than in the feeling, and its distinguishing mark consists in the set purpose to please and to serve. And this is true of our love for God. It is to be found in the consecration of the life and the devotion of the will; not in ebullitions of the sensibilities, but in the fixed purpose to please and serve. If along with this the heart should be 'strangely warmed,' there is no objection; but after all the root of the matter must be found in the life of de-

votion and service." And then the other, the last, on the next page. He is still discussing the idea of emotion as an attendant of the experience of conversion, and says: "A frequent consequence of this error . . . is that the attention of the inquirer is diverted from the central and essential thing, the surrender of the will and life to God, and fixed upon having an experience. . . . Thus the volitional and ethical element, which is essential, is subordinated to a passive and emotional element, which in any case is only a non-essential attendant of religious consecration, and which in many cases is purely pathological."

The mistakes of Bowne's thinking are so numerous here, from the Christian point of view, that we are at a loss to know where to begin. In the first place no Christian leader ever stresses the emotional expectation, but always the faith act. Bowne ignores wholly the faith act, because he has no justification by faith in his system. He knows nothing but a God assisted self-dedication to duty and service. But this is losing the New Testament and going back into the Old. But we cannot treat separately every mistake of the author in these quotations, let us make a list of our criticisms, adding some brief, hasty comments as we go along.

1. He repudiates the familiar distinction between the moral man and the saved man.
2. He grounds the need of conversion in acquired bad habits and false sets of the will, rather than in the natural depravity of the human life as Jesus said: "That which is

born of the flesh is flesh." It was not Nicodemus' acquired habits, but the spiritual inadequacy of nature's start that was wrong with him.

3. He locates love in the will; whereas every one knows that love is always an emotion before it can be a purpose of loyalty.

4. He belittles Wesley's experience of a heart strangely warmed in comparison with his purpose of consecration and obedience. And yet history proves him false in this, for Wesley had had the purpose of loyalty through more than a decade of practical uselessness. But the incoming of emotion was in him the beginning of power.

5. He utterly misses the fact that at the heart of every powerful experience of conversion is a wonderful sense of the divine come near with all sufficient pardoning grace. And whatever may be the professor's abstract theories to the contrary this experience, either as an emotion, or as a metaphysical work deeper even than emotion, is mighty to the conquest of sin. The Christian centuries with one voice proclaim the distinction between human resolution, even resolution supported by certain prayers for assistance, and the mighty experience of regeneration.

6. As we said sometime back he seems to be unconscious that the central emphasis of conversion is the act of self-abandoning faith. Hearts are not converted by self-consecration. The beginning of conversion is in an act of self-abandoning faith that cries out:

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.”

We conclude by frankly admitting the difficulty of our position, as venturing to urge severe criticism against one of the foremost philosophical minds of our times. But our defense is apparent. We have kept close to the Bible and the Christian centuries, from both of which Bowne departs. His Christianity is a product of his own unaided reason. From history he has accepted but two things, the divine Christ and the ethics and Kingdom of God. About these, by the power of his reason, he has built a religion that is nobler than Judaism by so much as the truth of Christ is grander than that of the prophets; but every sublimity of Historic Christianity is wanting in it. It is ethical monotheism with the figure of Christ in the centre as its chief teacher and supreme example. It is this and no more. It is utterly without value as a gospel for lost men who know in bitter experience the awful guilt and battle of sin. From Bowne's book such hearts will turn away with the cry of Magdalene at the sepulchre, “They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.”

## CHAPTER VII.

### CHILD PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS PEDAGOGY.



CHILD Psychology and Religious Pedagogy is represented in the Course of Study by three volumes. Professor Luther Weigle's "The Pupil and the Teacher," Dr. H. H. Meyer's, "Graded Sunday School in Principle and Practice," and Dr. George H. Betts' "How to Teach Religion."

These three volumes present to the reader a great many of the newer facts about child life. They show him the child mind. They analyze and systematize the various methods of approaching his mind, and of making deep impressions upon it. They are rich with many useful suggestions. And for all this the Church has only a cordial welcome and a warm gratitude.

But in addition to these things that are commendable these books all alike fail in one respect, namely, they do not seek to lead lost souls to justifying faith in the all-sufficient Savior. They have a different conception of natural life from that which Christ and his apostles taught, and they seek to bring men to salvation by a different road from that which Christ laid down. Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," and he said this as the ground of

his other statement, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

We are not under any necessity of argument at this point; from the point of view of Historic Christianity and of Methodism every Christian is a justified and regenerated sinner. Doubtless there are certain opinions in science that are hostile to this Christian position. But the opinion of a scientist, or even of a hundred scientists, is a very different thing from a scientific fact. No Christian belief can be held for a moment when real scientific facts invalidate it. But in two thousand years of faith no single item of fundamental Christian belief has been thus invalidated, and we do not need to tremble now.

There is great need for clear thinking at just this point. We need to discriminate between the established results of science, and the personal beliefs of scientists. When it comes to beliefs the soul has its own criteria; and the Christian centuries will show that the beliefs of the soul are more reliable than those of the intellect.

But the issues involved in the criticism of these books are among the most central in the whole field of the present day theological discussion, and so before turning to the texts of these books in detail let us freshen our grasp upon the great central truths of our faith.

The fundamental fact of Historic Christianity is the fall of man and the resulting racial condition of depravity. The whole redemptive program is provided to meet this

root condition. Christ was incarnate into a race that is sinful by nature. He died to make satisfaction for its weight of guilt. He lives, the fount of new life for whomsoever will. Salvation consists in a vital union with Christ, that is entered into by a humble self-abandoning faith in his Atonement as the answer to all guilt, and in his omnipotence as the answer to all impotence either of natural sin or of acquired habit. St. Paul splendidly phrases this union in the words, "Christ in you the hope of glory." In this divine program of salvation the human part is, above everything else, to exercise and to maintain the attitude of faith toward Christ as at once justifier and regenerator. The sinner's first experience waits upon his exercising such faith. His abiding experience is ever conditioned upon his continuing to exercise it; and the inner richness of his experience in Christ will be in proportion to the richness of this faith in its personal commitment and ethical quality.

Thus faith may be ethically superficial. It may look upon forgiveness as a matter-of-course and trust, what it believes to be, a certain amenable fatherliness in God. Such a faith, manifestly, falls far short of full Christian faith, yet God can do something for a soul in response to such a faith, though he cannot do all his great renewing and sanctifying work. He can only do this for a soul when it has entered into fellowship with the awful reaches of God's redeeming ethical love in the cross of Jesus.

The genius of sin is not animal tendencies,

but a certain deep-seated intoxication of self. The natural heart of man is proud, self-glorious, self-absorbed. Doubtless training can do much to refine us and to teach us how to govern our animal natures, but the cure of man's spiritual depravity, of his self-intoxication, of his self-absorption, of his eagerness for self in freedom, in glory, in independence,—the cure of this can only be wrought by the supernatural salvation of God. There is a fine passage in John Wesley's sermon on, "Justification by Faith." He is trying to answer why God has made justifying faith the condition of man's salvation, and he says: "One reason, however, we may humbly conceive, of God's fixing this condition of justification . . . . was to hide pride from man. Pride had already destroyed the very angels of God, had cast down a third part of the stars of heaven. It was likewise in great measure owing to this, when the tempter said, 'Ye shall be as gods,' that Adam fell from his own steadfastness, and brought sin and death into the world. It was therefore an instance of wisdom worthy of God, to appoint such a condition of reconciliation for him and all his posterity, as might effectually humble, might abase them to the dust. And such is faith. It is peculiarly fitted for his end: for he that cometh unto God by this faith, must fix his eye singly on his own wickedness, on his guilt and helplessness, without having the least regard to any supposed good in himself, to any virtue or righteousness whatsoever. He must come as a mere sinner, inwardly and

outwardly, self-destroyed and self-condemned, bringing nothing to God but ungodliness only, pleading nothing of his own but sin and misery. Thus it is, and thus alone, when his mouth is stopped, and he stands utterly guilty before God, that he can look unto Jesus as the whole and sole propitiation for his sins. Thus only can he be 'found in him,' and receive the righteousness which is of God by faith ' " (The last page in the fifth of John Wesley's standard sermons.)

Wesley shows here a deep understanding of sinful nature. He knew coarse sins and he knew that coarseness was but incidental. He knew that the genius of sin was deeper. He knew that sin was in its essence a thing of the spirit, not of the animal appetites. How profoundly, too, he has penetrated and laid bare the inner philosophy of salvation. God is not struggling with bad habits, and coarse vices, but with a deep spiritual self-intoxication, a self-obsession, a pride that makes social life constantly difficult and almost impossible. And so he humbles man; he shows him his deep inward ruin, until his sense of guilt and shame presses him upon his face, and all his glory of self is drained out of him. Then humbled, he exalts him.

But to return to Wesley's conception of Christian faith as he uses it in this passage. One can analyze in it three great attitudes. First, there is a surrendering to the truth of one's sense of sin and guilt and shame. Second, there is a deep moral eagerness that is broadened into a great personal surrender

to Christ as Master and Lord. And third, there is a wonderful self-entrusting to him: his propitiation to meet our guilt; his all sufficiency to meet our every need. And to this self-abandoning, self-yielding, self-entrusting faith Christ responds. There is a supernatural work, and the believer knows that he has passed from death unto life. This is justification by faith.

Under wise Christian instruction entrance into this experience will generally be, we believe, crisisal in form. But we are not insisting upon the crisis. What we are insisting upon is that every soul be brought to recognize its deep moral need, and be led on to exercise faith in Christ in the full New Testament sense analyzed above. Again we affirm that to every measure and quality of faith God will respond in some gracious work; but God can only perform His full, rich, redeeming and sanctifying work in response to that whole rich Christian faith in Christ which appropriates him as at once justifier and regenerator.

Now suppose we drop the idea of "saving faith" altogether, and substitute for it a mere surrender of the will to Christ, a consecration of self to work with him for one's fellowmen; is this latter idea the full equivalent of the former? Manifestly it is not. In the first place there is no emptying out of pride, and of a man's whole glory of self. In the second place there is no wondrous uniting to Christ, no such union with Him as could express itself in any of St. Paul's great mystical phrases. In the third place

there is no ethically satisfying handling of the question of guilt. Such a self-dedication to Christ's Kingdom is a worthy act, a noble act, but as compared with Christian saving faith it is in every way superficial. Bring it to the test of a guilty sinner's heart upon his death-bed, and its utter inadequacy becomes immediately apparent. It is the glory of Christ's gospel that it is fitted to man's lost condition. No matter the past, no matter any past, no matter any past guilt or present impotency—Christ is sufficient. Wesley phrased it nobly at his dying when he said: Nothing that I have done will bear looking at; this is my only hope—

"I the chief of sinners am,  
But Jesus died for me."

And he who would possess such an all-sufficiency in Christ cannot have any measure of self-sufficiency. He who would have such an all-confidence toward Christ cannot have any measure of self-confidence. He must be able to cry out with St. Paul, that everything of self-attainment he reckons as refuse and dung, and cherishes only one passion—to be in Christ. The centre of his whole being must swing from self to Christ. Christ must more than master his will; He must fill his whole being. Self-glory must be gone until Christ alone is glory. Self-sufficiency must be gone, and Christ must be unto him wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Christ must fill his love until his day-by-day experience is, "The love of Christ constraineth me." Christ must possess him until neither his own con-

science nor the everlasting Throne of God's righteousness can sense a separation between, and Christ, and he in Christ, stands justified complete.

This, in rapid outline, is the Christian Gospel, and has been the Christian Gospel through two thousand years. This is the Gospel that is defined in our Articles of Religion, and expressed in our hymns; but these ideas are almost totally wanting in the books under discussion. They have no such sense of a race-wide depravity, no such sense of a great complete salvation, no such idea of justifying faith or purpose of leading hearts into it. Instead of these things, Christian character is to be manufactured by training instincts, inculcating good habits, implanting noble principles; and hearts are to be led at last to nothing more than a great volitional affirmation that they will live by these rules and in these ways, and that they will dedicate their lives in service to their fellow men. Prayer for God's assistance in doing these things comes in certainly; but Buddhists, Mohammedans, Jews, Unitarians do the same. A little prayer, or even prayer in Jesus' name, cannot transform mere self-poised ethical theism into the Christian Gospel. Ethical theism is man working out his own salvation with such assistance as he can find. The Gospel is man's self-despairing and self-abandoning trusting of his whole being to Christ to be justified, regenerated, sanctified and glorified. And at last when the work is done, in the midst of the Crystal pavement, before the great

white Throne, he stands and cries with humble but enraptured heart: "Thine is the Kingdom the Power and the Glory unto all ages. Amen."

We turn to the books themselves.

## CHAPTER VIII.

MEYER, WEIGLE AND BETTS.



**N** turning, now, to these books in the field of religious psychology and pedagogy we will begin with Dr. H. H. Meyer's, the Editor of our Sunday school literature. The title of his book is, "The Graded Sunday School in Principle and Practice."

This production has the familiar values and familiar short-comings of the writings of the cultural school. It reduces Christianity to a mere system of religious ethics in which Christ is simply the great teacher and exemplar. Of course Dr. Meyer recognizes the Deity of Christ, but that is not the question. Deity in Christ is for the Christian system the foundation for a great faith in his justifying and regenerating work, and these ideas are not used in Dr. Meyer's volume. Nor can it be claimed that there is no reason why they should appear in an educational work, for this is an educational work that seeks to make people Christians, and if there is no need of any reference to these great ideas in such a work, then we must infer that it is possible to make people Christians without leading them to exercise justifying faith in the redemption of Christ. Manifestly, then, we are being presented with a new type of Christianity, one differing widely from that defined in our Ar-

ticles of Religion, and from that which has been preached through two thousand years of Christian history.

On page 50 the author says: "It remains here only to emphasize the fact that noble and Christlike character normally is the product of growth and training rather than of sudden revolution; that the work of religious education is one of preservation and guidance rather than of rescue." Here in one sentence the author cuts loose from the most fundamental belief of Historic Christianity, that, namely, of man's universal depravity, that sin brought into the race a great spiritual catastrophe. However much of development and of training there is in Christian education it is development and training to bring us into contact with a tremendous supernatural salvation by which we are rescued from the race-wide consequences of the fall. To omit this conception, or to lose it out of emphasis is to lose the Christianity of the New Testament.

On the same page Dr. Meyer distinguishes between the moral man and the Christian saint. He says, "The moral man is the man who possesses high standards of personal, social and civic life, and who does not deviate from his standards. A saint is a man who, in addition to high standards has a noble religious faith by which he tests these standards and controls his life." Is Christianity, then, nothing but ethical standards plus a religious motive? Did St. Paul so express it in the New Testament? In Philippians where he contrasts the moral man and the Christian

saint there is a universe between the two ideas. He says the things that he had once counted gain, as a moral man, he now reckons as refuse, dung, that he might know Christ. One cannot miss the difference here between St. Paul and the author. But again on page 16 he refers the student to Kirkpatrick's "Fundamentals of Child Study," and to Coe's, "The Spiritual Life," yet both of these writers are openly hostile to Historic Christianity both in respect of the fall of man, depravity and regeneration. Kirkpatrick is a Darwinian, making depravity nothing but the traits of animal life not yet outgrown. Of course this view is morally superficial, scientifically without foundation, and from the standpoint of Christianity, revolutionary.

On page 41 Christ is appreciated as the supreme ideal of life. Noble lives and characters are to be presented to the developing child mind as a background for the presentation of "the crystal life and character of Jesus, and a setting for the personal ideal of perfect love and service." We have no criticism of this, except that it is pitifully inadequate. The same idea is again developed on pages 43-44 where the Bible is appreciated and the supreme worth of the teachings of Christ is recognized both in respect of his words and works and life. Again we have no criticism save that we nowhere find anything larger, we nowhere find the great redemptive conceptions that are central in Christianity.

On page 51 the author describes mature Christian character, and there is no slightest

hint of St. Paul's sublime mysticism, Christ in me to will and to do of his own good pleasure; instead we have nothing but firmly established habits of thought and principles of action.

"The Pupil and the Teacher," by Professor Luther Weigle, develops the same incomplete ideas. The goal of religious training is stated on page 195 as to "accept the love of God as revealed in Jesus, and to live as God's child." Before this decision the work of the teacher is to prepare the child to make it, and afterward to help him to carry it out. But in Christian consciousness the love of God achieved forgiveness through the redeeming sacrifice of Jesus, and the initiatory Christian act is one of self-abandoning faith in this justifying and regenerating sufficiency. The two ideas are not equivalents. The one is self-poised, the other is self-abandoning; the one is ethically self-complacent; it accepts love and tries to do its best for love; the other is ethically tremendous; it moves through self-guilt, self-humiliation, self-abandonment out into Christ's allness. There is no need of further quotations; this is the defect of the book. All that it says and teaches truly and well falls short because the author does not aim at the fully Christian goal. We want a little later to speak more definitely a word of appreciation of much that is splendid in these books, but before doing this we pass on to the same defect already analyzed in Dr. Bett's book, "How to Teach Religion."

Professor Betts describes the movement

and goal of religious training as he understands it in several places in his volume, but it is very clearly put on pages 84 and 85. We will quote rather extensively to get the whole spirit and movement of his thought. The caption of the paragraph is, "The Evolution of Spiritual Responsiveness." The paragraph is as follows: "The realization of this new spiritual consciousness in the child's life may not involve any special nor abrupt upheaval. If the child is wisely led, and if he develops normally in his religion, it almost certainly will not. Countless thousands of those who are living lives very full of spiritual values have come into the rich consciousness of divine relationship so gradually that the separate steps cannot be distinguished. 'First the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear' is the natural law of spiritual growth."

"The bearing of this truth upon our teaching is that we must seek for the unfolding of the child's spiritual nature and for the turning of his thoughts and affections toward God from the first. We must not point to some distant day ahead when the child will 'accept Jesus' or become 'a child of God.' We must ourselves think of the child, and lead the child to think of himself as a member of God's family."

"This does not mean that the child as he grows from childhood into youth, and adulthood, will not need to make a personal and definite decision to give God and the Christ first place in his life; he will need to do this not once but many times. It only means

that from his earliest years the child is to be made to feel that he belongs to God, and should turn to him as Father and Friend. Day by day and week by week the child should be growing more vitally conscious of God's place in his life, and more responsive to this relationship. Only by this steady and continuous process of growth will the spiritual nature take on the depth and quality which the Christian ideal sets for its attainment."

There are many things that we need to remember in reading this. First, there is no conception of God here that is not just as complete in the twenty-third Psalm. The author of that Psalm, centuries before Christ came, had just as much faith in God as his Father and Friend as is possible to express. If then the attitude described here as the goal of training is really complete, if it is the Christian goal, then the cross of Christ is a useless sacrifice. Second, no one who understands Historic Christianity ever described the initiatory act of Christian life as a decision to put God and the Christ first. There is no possibility of confusing this sentence with, justification by faith alone. Third, this position utterly fails to appreciate the deep spiritual nature of sin. It evidently assumes that sin is largely a matter of coarse habits.

But again, that we are having Christianity reduced to mere ethical theism, in which Christ stands simply as the great teacher and exemplar, comes out even more definitely in the author's Ten Purposes,—one won-

ders if ten is reminiscent of God's Ten Commandments? But here are the author's ten:

I will respect and care for my body.

I will keep good natured, cheerful and responsive.

I will take pride in work and thrift.

I will be honest and speak the truth.

I will be obedient to the rules of my home and school and to the laws of my country.

I will be courteous and kind.

I will show courage and self-control.

I will be dependable and do my duty.

I will love and enjoy nature.

I will each day turn to my Heavenly Father for help, strength and forgiveness.

Two or three questions come to our mind. Paul asks, "Where then is glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? No, of faith;" but our author makes use of pride as a productive motive. How utterly impossible it would be to apply this motive in Jesus' life? Pride springs out of the desire for self-exaltation, for superiority. The author makes a child say: "If I can stand at the head of my class, I will, but only when I have earned the right by honest effort." Certainly the honest effort idea is fine, but it cannot blind the discerning ethical sense to the fact that the desire for superiority lies within it, and that this is the very inner principle of sin. St. Paul blushed to say that he had labored more than all the apostles because Christian experience meant to him a self lost to glory and exaltation. "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of my Lord," was his life's one transfiguring

joy. If it should be replied that rivalry is the spice of life we make no other objection than to say, certainly, but life is so deeply wrong that Jesus said men must be born again before they can so much as see the Kingdom of God. But this is certain that there will be no rivalry, no smallest desire for superiority in heaven, either honest or dishonest. The one motive of heaven, or the Kingdom, whether in this world or in the next is an all-filling sense of love and duty—the love of Christ constraineth me. But we do not want to stress this criticism of the author; it is simply a passing illustration of how the new educational goal comes short of the great Christian realities all along the line.

Another question that comes to us is, does the author purposely substitute "I will," for "Thou shalt?" Is he timid of a divine authority? Jesus said his meat was to do the Father's will. True Christianity has no sensitiveness at this point. St. Paul called himself the slave of God and of Jesus. Of course there is something going around about our democratic times being resentful of the Absolute God; but then he is absolute just the same, and one of the secrets of salvation is that we come in regeneration to love this all-mastering will we once resented and hated. "I love to be controlled," runs a line of one of our greatest hymns. Would it be unfair to say that this sensitiveness of the modern man to God's absolute authority manifests the very depravity he so stoutly denies?

Then in conclusion we want to notice the omission of any relationship to Christ's redeeming work. Instead we turn to the Heavenly Father for forgiveness. Yes, and the Psalmist did this with full assurance before Christ came. But the Christian Church has ever seen in this Old Testament confidence something partial, that looked forward to be completed in Christ. Paul says that all forgiveness before Christ's coming looked forward to his propitiatory work; that God forgave then with a view to this later redemption. And now shall we, who live in the dispensation of this mighty ethical accomplishment return to the twilight of prophetic glimmering confidence?

One final criticism of quite an incidental character. The author says on page 112, "The early Christians had, of course, only the scriptures of the Old Testament. It was nearly four hundred years after Christ had lived on earth before we had a list of the New Testament books such as our Bible now contains. In the middle of the second century only about half of the present New Testament was in use as a part of the Scriptures." We simply express the judgment that the author's statement is very misleading, and in part incorrect.

And now we want to express again and more definitely the conviction that there is very much of abiding worth in these books. There is no doubt that education can do large things for the child. It is possible to keep the child free from coarse sins. It is possible to protect him from the allurements of

sin's gaudy show. It is possible to put into his life good and useful habits and to develop his moral and natural powers, just as our authors teach. But all of this is below the level of a real Christian goal. And the Christian Church is waiting for that master of the scientific facts of modern psychology, who, steadily holding to the Christian truths of the fall, depravity and redemption, will relate the modern scientific advance to abiding Christian truth. Most of the books in this field that we have seen are corrupted with the present-day naturalistic and Darwinian bias. Instead of holding to the great Christian verities, and relating the experimental facts of science to them, Christian verities are surrendered in the name of unproved, unprovable, and superficial theories. The ethical goals of modern psychologists are, as compared with Historic Christianity, sadly superficial. Jesus, St. Paul, and the great Christian theologians who have drunk at the fountain of New Testament truth move in thought altitudes that many of these modern writers have not even glimpsed from the distance. Their point of view is ethically superficial. Their goals are located in the Old Testament rather than in the New. They are offering to the Church mere ethical Theism in which Christ stands not as justifier and regenerator, but simply as the supreme teacher and exemplar. It is one of the tragedies of our times that so many young lives are being deceived by this inadequate program. As a working pastor I often hear this testimony: "I never was convert-

ed; I have always been a Christian." and then later after he has been led into an experience, this, "I never knew what it was to be a Christian until now." Would we therefore assume that all who do not know when they were converted never have been? By no means. Not every one has analytical powers enough to analyze his own experience. Not every temperament is self-introspective enough to observe his own experience. We would conclude simply this; that it is time we stopped setting up human inductions as a basis for contradicting God's word. He said ye must be born again, and that that which is born of the flesh is only flesh. Doubtless experiences in Christ are as different as leaves on a maple tree, no two of which will be identical. And yet there will always be the great characteristics: the sense of sin and guilt leading us to a complete self-abandonment; the act of justifying faith in which we swing all our confidence from self to Christ; the incoming of his Spirit giving to us the inner assurance that we are accepted in the Beloved.

As we said long ago, to every measure and quality of faith Christ makes some response, but he can only do his full justifying, regenerating, and sanctifying work in relation to fully Christian faith. If a person's faith Christward is a gradually enlarging and deepening thing his experience will naturally be likewise gradually enlarging. But if he is ever to come to rich, abounding, supernatural, confident sonship in Christ he must come swiftly or gradually to such

a deep recognition of his own sin, guilt and ruin as will cry out,

“Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that thy blood was shed for me,  
And that thou bidd’st me come to thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come!”

## CHAPTER IX.

### MODERN PRE-MILLENNIALISM AND THE CHRISTIAN HOPE

By Prof. Harris Franklin Rall, of Garrett  
Biblical Institute.

ROFESSOR RALL has two books in the present Course of Study, this one and his New Testament History. Both volumes represent in greater or less degree the current destructive attitude toward New Testament facts. In his earlier volume, the history, there is much of real beauty and worth, but there is also a good bit that is halting or even destructive. We will come to this later, our present interest is in his more recent volume.

In the introduction to this book Professor Rall offers some initiatory explanations of his own position, as one engaging in theological controversy. We call attention to it, because it ought to enable him perfectly to understand why we feel called upon to point out the revolutionary significance of his own volumes. Thus he says that the Church has been preoccupied with practical concerns, and warns us that our supreme vocation is the truth, and that the truths we hold will in the long run shape our practical ideals. He tells us also that single doctrines may determine a thinker's whole theological position,

and that therefore a doctrine must be considered not only in itself but in relation to the whole system of thought that it fits into. Both of these statements are true, and they are both far more significant as applied to his own divergences than in the relation in which he is using them. But the closing paragraph of his introduction is so expressive of our own attitude toward him and others who share his rationalistic point of view that we want to quote from it somewhat at length.

In this paragraph he speaks with fine Christian charity about differences of opinion and then continues: "But all this does not relieve us of the responsibility of inquiring whether we have here a true interpretation of Christianity, and what its significance would be for the Christian church. One does not need to be either a dogmatist or a heresy-hunter to realize how profoundly the life of man is determined by the truths which he holds. If this teaching of modern chiliasm be true, then a revolution is in order in the aims and plans to which our churches are committed, and which we are using as the rallying call for a new crusade. If it is not true, then it is of the greatest importance that the character and consequence of this doctrine be pointed out. That is what is here undertaken."

If the reader will replace the Professor's word, chiliasm, with the words, radical theology, this apology of the author for his controversial book will almost perfectly express the motive of our own writing. Is Christ er-

rant or in-errant? Is man lost and needing redemption or only undeveloped and in need of leadership? Is the Bible the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice or only a fallible, though spiritually extraordinary book? The Church has come to an epochal point in history, shall it continue in the faith of the past twenty centuries, or shall it abandon it? From now on shall we preach the Cross as the power of God to our salvation, or simply as the beautiful symbol of all self-sacrifice in which Jesus stands only as the first among equals? The issues involved in the pre-millennial controversy pale into insignificance when compared with these. Certainly a man does not need to be "a heresy-hunter" to realize how profoundly different the life of the Church will be if it departs from its historic positions and adopts these new views. It is because we see this situation that we are undertaking to point out the danger.

In turning to the author's volume we will pass by altogether the pre-millennial question. It is not, and there does not seem to be any need for its being defined in our Church standards. In Eschatology there has always been large room for personal opinion. But Professor Rall rejects much more than the pre-millennial theory of the Savior's return, he rejects the return itself, and makes Jesus as well as his disciples mistaken in respect to this major item of his teaching, and their belief.

To be sure he tries to show that this is quite a reasonable situation, that Jesus was

in this respect simply a child of his age, knowing neither more nor less of history or of science than was known by men about him. But Jesus' gospel, we point out, was not a matter either of history or of science, it was a matter of his own inner spiritual certainty, and in his thought his return was a part of that gospel. If he was mistaken in this matter his infallibility is gone, and it is gone not in respect of science, but of religion.

If Jesus did not know whether it was God's purpose for him to return at the end of the present dispensation to raise the dead and complete judgment, then he did not know God's will with respect to redemption, and we have no certainty that he knew God's will infallibly in any respect. If we can differ with the Savior as to his return, then we are at the end of all authority, Christ ceases to be God Incarnate, and Christianity becomes simply a system of ethical monotheism in which Jesus is only the supreme teacher and great example. If pre-millennialism has far-reaching theological consequences so has an errant Christ. Unitarianism is the inevitable destination of the mind that starts down this road.

Here, stated briefly, are the author's positions at this point: Jesus' long discourse concerning his return and the end of the world, as reported in all of the Synoptic Gospels, is not an accurate presentation of his ideas. The core of the ideas found there is from Jesus, but the evangelists have amplified and modified it. The current Jewish

apocalyptic literature and thought considerably affected these discourses.

Jesus' own thought is very much less influenced by this apocalyptic material than that of the apostles, yet he too apparently expected that he would return, and that speedily, indeed, during the life-time of the men who had rejected him. In this expectation the author concludes that he seems to have been in error, his error being due to the influence of Jewish expectation upon his thought.

The author completes this chapter on, "The Kingdom Hope with Jesus," with a statement of what that hope is as he has corrected it by omitting the second coming. There is something peculiarly shocking about such a reconstruction of Jesus' thought for the purpose of eliminating his errors.

And now for a few citations that might be multiplied in which the author's position as set forth above is expressed by himself.

He is referring in one paragraph to the Synoptic accounts of the discourse of Jesus with his disciples concerning the end of the world and his return. He says: "The writer holds with those who believe that we have here a later composition embodying sayings of Jesus, perhaps uttered at different times even, but amplified and modified." 58p.

With respect to the Savior's expectation of his own return, he writes: "Apparently, Jesus expected in the near future some great manifestation of the power of God which would bring in the kingdom. Connected with this was his expectation that he himself

would return to consummate his work and that this return would evidence his Messiahship to the men who had rejected him." 69p.

That Jesus was mistaken in this expectation the author states on the next page, thus: "First of all we consider the fact that Jesus' expectation was not fulfilled in the form in which he held it." 70p.

Turning from Jesus to the primitive Church, the author admits that they all followed the Master in his mistaken expectation. He says: "Paul held the general apocalyptic framework, a common Jewish and early Christian possession. For him, as for the early Christians all, Christ and his return was the heart of the apocalyptic hope." 83p.

We would call attention to the fact that for Methodism the Bible is the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice, and that this is defined both in the Articles of Religion and the General Rules; and that in addition the return of Jesus at the end of the world to be our judge is established in the third of our Articles; so that the professor's position here is clearly out of harmony with the established beliefs of his Church.

But not only does Dr. Rall thus directly repudiate one established item of faith, and by implication several others, but in some of the later chapters of his book he goes on to make explicit his rejection of the authority of the Bible which is, by implication, surrendered from the beginning.

The conception that comes to our mind in reading his paragraphs is that he looks upon

the Bible as a product of men of great spiritual genius, who appeared in history at just the providential times to accomplish the unfolding of Israel's vocation. They were not prophets, supernaturally endued, who spoke for God, and to whom he revealed his will for the future as well as for the present. Dr. Rall specifically rejects the idea that the prophets had supernatural pre-vision. They were men who knew the world movements of their day, and they fore-saw the future by the simple application of general moral principles. Thus, Isaiah wants to say, that the wages of sin is death, but instead of saying it thus he writes, Ho Assyria the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation. (Isaiah 10:5) 192p. It is interesting to notice in this same connection that the author asserts that there is no reference to a suffering Messiah in the Old Testament. (New Testament History 113p.)

Perhaps the clearest expression of his attitude toward Scripture comes out on pages 228-229. He says: "The absolutistic conception of God leads inevitably to the institutional conception of religion. Religion too, must be something definite and fixed and perfect or it could not have come from God.....Now, religion as a life and an experience is always something growing, and therefore imperfect. Hence the real essence of this religion (the absolutist) must be sought elsewhere and in something that is fixed and complete. Sometimes that is found in the creeds or in some system of doctrine, sometimes in the Bible conceived as

verbally inspired and infallible. . . . . But whichever it is, doctrine or letter of Scripture, or church, it appears as a final and absolute authority to which man has merely to bow in submission." Having stated this view the author goes on to point out that it makes of God a despot, and that it is not acceptable.

In this paragraph we have a definite rejection of the infallibility of the Bible. The author does not simply reject the verbal inspiration theory, but infallibility itself. The Bible is errant, and even Christ who stands at the end of the revelational movement is errant. The author is clearly forcing us to a choice between Historic Christianity, on the one hand, and a fluent imperfect, evolving faith on the other. Historic Christianity itself is a movement, but it is a great supernatural movement true at every stage of its unfolding, and finally brought to its sublime climax in the Incarnation. Of this movement and climax the Bible is the perfect and sufficient record and interpretation.

When the Church is asked to surrender this great faith for a sort of comedy, or tragedy of errors it is being summoned to no small sacrifice. Let us consider one or two illustrations of what the author means when he speaks of religion as something growing and imperfect.

There is first of all the matter of our Lord's expectation that he would return at the end of the world. For twenty centuries the Church has confessed its faith in this as very truth. Now we are told that the belief

is mistaken. The probable residuum of truth in this expectation would doubtless be, according to the author, that the rule of God is coming. Here we can see the gradually clearing truth and the element of error in the process. Similarly for twenty centuries the Church has believed that Jesus went to Jerusalem with the definite purpose of giving his life there as a propitiation for sin. But our professor admits nothing of the kind. He never presents Jesus as looking upon his death as a purpose. Doubtless this propitiatory conception must be looked upon again as the element of error, the truth being that divine love will not shrink from any incidental sacrifice that may be involved in his effort to help men.

It requires no great insight to realize that such opinions must inevitably make of Christianity a little naturalistic system in which the Incarnation becomes incongruous and impossible. The Bible is not God's supernatural revelation, the prophets did not have a supernatural prevision, there is no suffering Messiah in the Old Testament, Jesus himself is errant, his death was not a redeeming sacrifice but simply an incidental expression of his love and loyalty, and the Gospel that has been preached in his name is not the truth but an imperfect conception containing elements of error,—it is easy to see that the Incarnation is as incongruous in the center of such a movement as a nursery would be in the center of a battle front. Professor Rall does indeed hold to the Incarnation and the healing ministries of Jesus,

but these ideas have no fitness to his system, and his students will inevitably do one of two things, they will either move on to a completer rationalism, or else react toward Historic Christianity with its supernatural Bible, its prophetic pre-vision, its inerrant Christ, and its sublime atoning cross.

A closing word. Professor Rall makes large claims with respect to the scholarly consensus at one point in his book; but it ought to be pointed out that it is not his scholarship, but simply his personal bias that determines his beliefs. What single scientific fact can he allege to prove that Jesus will not return just exactly as he expected? Science knows absolutely nothing about God's final purposes, and clear headed science never enters such a field. If we are to have any knowledge of God's great consummations we must have it by supernatural revelation, and in this field, who better than Jesus can speak the final purposes of the Father?

## CHAPTER X.

### NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY,

By Professor Harris Franklin Rall.



HIS earlier volume by Professor Rall is the better, that is, it is the less boldly divergent of his two in the Course of Study. The author has expressed in it his heart's own wonder before the personality of Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God, and the reader will not miss this fine reverence. Yet the book has much in it that is hesitating and even divergent from the point of view of Historic Christianity. We will begin by summarizing our criticisms, and then treat them in detail with citations.

Dr. Rall is hesitating as to the Virgin birth and mistaken in his statement of its New Testament evidences. (Pages 34 and 35).

He tones down Jesus' teaching concerning his death to make it fit his own divergent views on this subject. Professor Rall does not accept the redemptive and propitiatory conception of the cross as defined in the twentieth of our Articles of Religion. The cross is not to him a great redeeming work, an achievement, and so he modifies the Saviour's teaching upon this subject from the New Testament's powerful, it is necessary, it is fated, it is ordained that the Messiah

must suffer and die, to his own weaker conception that such a death was very probable, "death might come."

The author makes this conception only a late idea in Jesus' mind, and never to the last is it understood as a great redeeming purpose, but only as something incidental in connection with his teaching ministry at Jerusalem. (Pages 42, 112, 113, 136, 305).

He rejects the apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel thus depriving the Church of those sublime discourses of Jesus, which are incomparable in literature. (Pages 105, 287-290).

The idea of demoniacal possession is made one that came from Persia in the second century B. C., and Jesus' own relation to this mistaken notion is left unexplained. The author admits that Jesus commanded demons out of men, but whether in doing this he shared the superstition of the people or accommodated himself to it he does not say. It is a striking fact that modern science is reacting toward the New Testament view of this matter, and that in some of the mission fields the phenomenon can be seen as in Jesus' day. (Page 54-55).

For him the New Testament is not only not verbally inspired (a view that was never defined in Methodism, since our doctrinal positions are practical and vital rather than theoretical) but it is errant. The author broadly suggests that the apostles may have unconsciously altered the teaching of Jesus, having written into it ideas of their own that he did not share. This position he takes defi-

nitely in his later volume which we have already examined. (Pages 124, 125).

He regards the accounts of the resurrection as so dissimilar as to be irreconcilable, and raises a question as to the possibility of harmonizing the accounts of the nativity. (Pages 140, 141, 34).

He defines the meaning of Christ's Cross in terms of the Moral Influence theory, which as a secondary value is profoundly true, but which as the whole meaning of Christ's redeeming death, loses it altogether. If Christ did not die a propitiation for sin, there can be no such thing as justification by faith, and the Bible is errant even in a major teaching, and Christianity has been wrong from the beginning. (Page 136). But let us turn to some of these items and consider them more in detail.

The author's position on the Virgin Birth is stated on pages 34 and 35. He says:

"As to the story of the virgin birth, it has been pointed out that the rest of the New Testament is silent upon this, and that in Luke there is but a single clause that refers to it. Two points should be made clear here. One is that the virgin birth was evidently not essential for the faith of the early Church. Paul and John, who say nothing concerning it, are the two writers who give us the highest conception of the divinity of Jesus. The other is, that to the Church it has always seemed the fitting conception of the mode of the coming of the Messiah. It is always to be remembered, however, that it is the character and life of Jesus which lead

us to believe in the virgin birth, and not the virgin birth which leads us to believe in Jesus."

Now notice that the author seems plainly to deny that there is any reference to the virgin birth in Paul or John or Matthew. Yet Matthew says definitely that Joseph was not the father of Jesus, that he was a child of the Holy Ghost, and quotes an Old Testament prophecy concerning the virginity of his mother. And other scholars do find probable references to this wonderful circumstance of Jesus' birth in both John and Paul.

Notice, second, that the author says that Luke's reference is confined to "a single clause," and yet the fact is that five verses from the 34th-38th inclusive of Luke first chapter deal exclusively with this one idea, and that there are many other verses in which this idea is implicit. Certainly Professor Rall does say that the Church has always seen the fitness of this idea; but to admit that, as an idea, it has value, is but poor compensation after he has sought to belittle the evidences of it as a fact.

The Methodist Church confesses the virgin birth of Jesus, and such a miracle is a mere trifle compared with the whole towering fact of God Incarnate. What use then of straining at the gnat and swallowing the camel? But, again, Methodism confesses the virgin birth, it is a part of Historic Christianity. Our courses of study are not provided to raise up a body of weak, mediating preachers whose own faith is whittled down, and who can therefore mediate between His-

toric Christianity and the modern anti-supernaturalism. Historic Christianity is supernatural from end to end, and the mediating view is as fatal to it as complete negations. Methodism as a part of Historic Christianity, seeks through its courses of study to produce men of robust faith: therefore such a hesitating attitude toward the virgin birth of Jesus as the author expresses here is not admissible. But vastly more important is the author's attitude toward Christ's death.

He defines the meaning of the cross on page 136:

"It wrought the sense of sin and the feeling of penitence which he had wished to call forth. It stood forth as the crowning deed of his love in which they saw the love and mercy of God. It fixed forever the ideal of his life as that of love and service, and the ideal of the Christian life for those who were to follow him."

Notice there is no suggestion here that the cross made it possible for the Father to forgive the guilt of sin without violating his holiness. The cross is presented as moving men, as expressing God's love, as fixing for all future centuries the love ideal of Christ's life, but nothing more. But the second of our Articles of Religion affirms that Christ died to "reconcile his Father to us," that is, that by his sacrifice he made it possible for God's love to forgive us without doing violence to his holiness. And this idea has been from the beginning the vital centre of the Christian re-

ligion. Jesus taught it repeatedly, he gave it symbolic expression in the sacramental meal, Peter preached it in the first Christian sermon on the day of Pentecost. It is the supreme truth of Paul. Luther started a great revival of religion by sweeping away from this truth the dust of good works and superstitious penances that had hidden it from the hearts of men.

Justification by faith in this finished work of Christ is the truth that came to supreme emphasis in John Wesley's life through his years of religious struggle, and he greatly stressed it in his preaching.

But Professor Rall sacrifices this whole truth. He omits it in his interpretation of the cross, above; and in his account of the events that lead up to the cross, he tones down the Savior's redemptive purpose to a sort of human insight that death awaited him if he went up to Jerusalem, combined with other human factors. Jesus did not go to Jerusalem because he comprehended and shared the redemptive purpose of God in his cross. He went because other doors were closed and he argued that God must, then, be calling him to Jerusalem and to death. How diminutive this is compared to the portrait the gospels present of him and the faith that the Christian centuries have held of him.

We will take time to quote one rather extended passage in which the author expresses just these views. It is from pages 112-113.

"We do not know when Jesus formed this resolution to go to Jerusalem. He saw it ap-

parently as the will of his Father, which he read in the course that his life had taken. Other doors were closed to him. In Galilee, where his work had begun with such promise, there were now the conspiring Pharisees and Herodians, and a people that had turned from him. To go to Gentile lands was to give up his mission. Only the way to Jerusalem was open. There he would make the last appeal to his people. The issue of that appeal, however, he clearly foresaw, and for that he had to prepare his disciples. . . . The finger of God pointed to Jerusalem, it was his to go. His duty was not to save himself, but to trust God; not to find his own way, but to obey. If God's way led to Jerusalem and death, then suffering and death were a part of God's plan and of his work. His death, then, was to accomplish what his life had failed to do."

The author makes this an original idea with Jesus, asserting that "Neither the Old Testament nor the teachers of his day knew anything of a suffering Messiah." He then continues, suggesting that Jesus found help in working out his conclusion from what he knew to have been the fate of so many prophets before him. "He had seen what had happened to John, and read in it his own end. That had been the fate of faithful messengers in the past, as he told them later at Jerusalem. He was not to escape it."

Half a dozen ideas are implicit here that are a serious departure from Christian faith concerning Jesus. First, it assumes that at the beginning Jesus had expected his preach-

ing ministry to succeed, and that his rejection involved a change of plan. Second, it assumes that Jesus' going up to Jerusalem was a sort of last forlorn hope, he still wished simply to win the people to his ethical program. Third, it contradicts St. John's clear statement that Jesus foresaw the cross from the very beginning of his ministry in Judea. Fourth, it contradicts the equally clear statement of the Synoptic Gospels that long before his going up to Jerusalem Jesus clearly taught his disciples that the cross was God's purpose for him there. Fifth, it contradicts the statement both of John and of the Synoptists that Jesus understood his cross as the great supreme redemptive achievement of his whole life. Does not Luke make Moses and Elias converse with him on the mount of transfiguration concerning his death which he is to accomplish at Jerusalem? Does not John the Baptist introduce him as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world? And does not he himself repeatedly speak of his redemptive ministry in those first sermons and conversations at Jerusalem? Sixth, it involves, not the inspiration only, but the very reliability of all the Gospel records. And, seventh, it introduces an element of uncertainty into the religious thought of Jesus that is inconsistent with his character as God incarnate, and even with his authority as a teacher.

If Jesus did not know God's purpose for him in the cross, if he only inferred it, if this inference was a late development and even

then not clearly understood, if it was an idea that came to him as a result partly of the fate of John the Baptist and of other prophets before him,—if, we say, his idea of the cross came to him from such sources what certainty have we that it might not have been mistaken? Might it not have been a pessimistic conclusion from the depressing experiences he had passed through? What certainty can Professor Rall give us that Jesus was right in this inference when he tells us that he was wrong in respect of another idea he announced much just at this same time, that, namely, of his Second Coming? The conclusion is inevitable, our author's teaching here tends to whittle down the figure of Christ from those sublime proportions in which the New Testament gives him to us. The author's position is mediating and impossible. His Christ is too small a figure to be the Son of God incarnate. Doubtless he would repudiate this opinion, for he holds firmly to the Deity of Christ; but the conclusion is nevertheless inevitable. An errant Christ cannot enduringly be looked upon as God. If Jesus was the son of Joseph, if he made mistakes, if the accounts of the resurrection are inaccurate, and Luke and Paul differ as to it,—if these ideas are accepted, it is not a great step to the denial of the supernatural altogether, and the transforming of Christ into a simple human genius. And why not? A human teacher is just as good as an errant divine one, and a human example is better. The denial of the Atonement makes unnecessary the Incarnation.

Similarly upon the matter of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel Dr. Rall weakens the historic view. It is not for him an apostolic writing. It is a late production bearing traces of the influence of St. Paul's teaching and incorporating "a tradition" concerning an outstanding event in the life of Jesus with the twelve. (See pages 105 and 287-290). The reader of these paragraphs by the author, if he is familiar with the rationalistic theory, that primitive Christianity was a simple system of ethical theism, and that Paul greatly modified it, will doubtless find in them reminders of this view. Half a dozen times in as many paragraphs the Fourth Gospel is related to Paul's thought. Its production witnesses the abiding influence of Paul's teaching. It is said to agree with Paul's positions. But why Paul? Why not common Christian belief, unless the author means to distinguish between them? Did Matthew, Mark and Luke hold different ideas of Christ and salvation from those held by John and Paul? The author does not, we think, come to any such conclusion; but is not this conclusion a necessary consequence of his statement that the influence of Paul's theology is apparent in John? Certainly the inferential basis is stronger here, to say the least, than that on which many a higher critical theory has been founded, and the author helps it by developing a difference between Paul and Luke on the matters of the resurrection of Jesus, his ascension, and of the gift of tongues. (See pages 141, 143, 144).

But this is the only point we care to insist upon here: that a book which makes the teaching of Paul to any extent the explanation of the theology of the discourses of the Fourth Gospel must deny the apostolic authorship of that Gospel. John who sat at the feet of Jesus, and received his theology from him direct could not have been guided by any lesser influence. If John heard Jesus say "In my father's house are many mansions" he wrote it because he heard Jesus say it and not because of any Pauline influence. Similarly if John wrote the Gospel he told that incident of the crisis at Capernaum when the people went away, because he was there and remembered it and remembered how Peter had said, "Lord to whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life." If this narrative in John six is grounded in "a tradition" John did not write it. Eye witnesses do not relate traditions about themselves and men who relate traditions are not eye witnesses.

Professor Rall says it is not important whether in these sublime discourses we have the literal speech of Jesus. But we cannot agree with him. It does make a great deal of difference. It makes a world of difference whether Jesus really said "Ye must be born again" or whether someone else who thought he had caught the point of view of Jesus wrote these words and put them into Jesus' mouth. Of course we can see how for Professor Rall it would make less difference than for the rest of us, for his Christ not only could, but did make mistakes. He made

a mistake as to his second coming, and Professor Rall suggests some other lines of possible error, as well as that he got his doctrine of the cross slowly by uncertain inference. We say, we can appreciate how for him, when he has already surrendered the authoritative Christ of the New Testament, it would not be so serious to lose his words. But for the rest of us to whom he is still one who speaks out of deep intuitions that are as certain as the mind of God this matter is one of great seriousness.

But why must we sacrifice all these things. Is there any scholarly reason against the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel? The principal one has been the difference of style between the Gospel and the Apocalypse. But the Professor does not assign the Apocalypse of St. John. What then? It may certainly be said that the story of Christ is more deeply told in John than in the Synoptics, but it cannot be shown that the figure of Christ is any more sublime in one than in the other. The cross of Christ is just as clear and just as redemptive in Matthew as in John, and the Deity of Christ just as unmistakable in Luke as in John or in Paul. And beside if we admit the need of time for development so as to get an argument against the apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel, then, of necessity, we make Paul or some one else beside Jesus the author of Christianity. The denial of the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel is a part of the rationalistic destructive criticism, and unless the Revelation is assigned to John and

the problem of style raised, it has no respectable foundation either internal or external. Those who sacrifice the apostolic authorship of John's Gospel do it generally to enable them to work out an evolution of Christian doctrine.

But let us pause for a moment to take one glance at some of the superficial subjectivities of this modern New Testament criticism, in the name of which we are called upon to surrender some of the most precious things of faith. Professor Rall does not give any of this detail in his book, he simply tells us in the introduction that he makes use of its "assured results."

Last summer an outstanding professor of one of our best known American Methodist universities was traveling with some fellow Methodists. He gave to them the following argument against the reliability of Matthew's Gospel. He said that in Mark's account of the healings that closed that great Sabbath day in Capernaum the record is, that they brought all of the sick of the city to Jesus, and he healed many of them; and that in Matthew's account it says, they brought many of the sick of the city to Jesus, and he healed all of them. Having pointed out this difference the professor asserted that it was a concrete instance of inaccuracy and exaggeration on the part of Matthew. He made much of his point, and, when some objection was made to the worth of the item, he replied: It is distinctions like that out of which criticism builds its arguments, and not to appreciate it is simply to manifest intellectual incapacity for the critical task.

No reply to such objections to the reliability and accuracy of the Biblical records is necessary for the practical mind that lives day by day in contact with reality. Such criticisms answer themselves. But consider, the professor said that this distinction was typical, and anyone who has read at all closely in this field knows that it is. There are distinctions made by some of the greatest names in Europe that have no more point to them than this one has. Certainly the lay mind cannot afford to take such critical arguments and conclusions by faith, and surrender for the sake of them the reliability of its New Testament records.

And consider, again, what must be the effect upon men's minds of constant reading in such a field, and constant looking for such divergences? One is reminded of how the Jewish rabbis used to pride themselves on their ability to hang tons of conclusion from a single hair of evidence. We laugh at them and boast our modern superiority. But to say no more, classifying such bald subjectivities, as we have been speaking of, as science is certainly caricaturing science.

But, in conclusion, Professor Rall's New Testament History is in many respects a strong volume, it is reverent, it is spiritual, it fully recognizes the essential deity of Christ. But it tones down Christian facts. It hesitates upon the virgin birth, its Christ made mistakes, its New Testament contains matters put into the mouth of Jesus by others, and which may, perhaps, misrepresent him. Its Christ did not definitely purpose to

give his life a propitiation for sin, indeed, he did not purpose his death at all, and the doctrine of Justification is lost for lack of a foundation to stand it on. It sets forth that Luke and Paul held a different idea of Christ's resurrection, that John's Gospel is not apostolic in origin,—in a word the volume is hesitating and mediating. It seeks to mediate between the robust supernaturalism of historic Christianity and the modern anti-supernaturalism. It might be helpful to shattered faith, but it will not tend to strengthen strong conviction. It will not equip men to preach the truths of Historic Christianity, the truths established as unchangeable in the Methodist Church. When it is remembered that Walker's Church History, the only other book in the course which covers this field of Christian beginnings, is very much more radical, and that ideas only vaguely suggested in Dr. Rall's work are strongly asserted there, the dangerous possibilities in the influence of the professor's halting and mediating opinions will be more fully appreciated.

## CHAPTER XI.

### A HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Prof. Williston Walker, in Yale University.



HE student of Professor Walker's book ought immediately to realize that the book is written from a chosen point of view. We make no criticism of this circumstance. In any comprehensive treatment an author's point of view is generally more or less a chosen one. In our author's case his chosen point of view is allowed to dominate the whole situation, so much so that he even allows it to modify his historic facts,—that is he reshapes facts to make them fit his point of view.

His point of view is that Historic Christianity is a gradual development from a rather simple beginning, and that in the working out of this process many factors united. Hebrew rabbincism, Greek philosophy, Roman politics are mentioned among them.

And the items thus evolved are the very chief truths of our Faith, namely, the Incarnation of the Eternal Son, his redemptive suffering, and justification by faith alone.

That this view is hopelessly discordant both with the New Testament and with historic Christian beliefs needs hardly to be pointed out. The New Testament makes the Incarnation, Redemption and Justification

all a part of the most primitive belief and teaching. The God-hood of Jesus is revealed and recognized before the ascension, his redemptive sacrifice is taught from the beginning, and is tremendously enforced toward the close. This is especially true of the period between the resurrection and the ascension. And Justification is from the very first the whole centre of the Gospel. Jesus gives to it abiding expression in the symbolic meal, the Last Supper. Peter preaches it in the first Christian sermon. And in the whole New Testament it is thus clear and emphatic.

In order to get rid of this clear teaching and emphasis the author is under the necessity of reconstructing the whole New Testament tradition. He must make some books late, use extensively the idea that the Gospels are corrupted by a reflection back into them of later beliefs, and surrender any worth while conception of Inspiration.

But even more seriously, an Incarnation that Jesus did not definitely teach, that was not definitely and strongly held from the beginning, is impossible. If Jesus did not definitely reveal his Godhood to his disciples, if this Godhood was not definitely recognized by them from the ascension forward, if, instead, this idea gradually grew, Paul being the first to recognize his pre-existence, and the author of John the first to conceive of him as God made manifest in the flesh,—if there was this evolution of belief as to his Godhood, and a similar evolution of belief as to Redemption and Justification then all of these truths have become uncertain, and will become incredible.

Who could believe in anything so stupendous as God made manifest in the flesh and redeeming men by an act of supreme self-sacrifice, and yet believe that he failed to make known either his person or his work to the men whom he commissioned as his apostles and missionaries? Such an Incarnation is too small to command the respect of robust intellects, even for a generation. A God who could thus bungle his redemptive program would deserve the pity rather than the worship of men.

But once again, the foundation for faith in the Incarnation is complex, but it is fundamentally and supremely historical. We believe in the Incarnation above everything else because we believe that we have in the New Testament an accurate record of its stupendous facts, its resurrection, its miracles, its virgin birth, its moral grandeur, its redeeming sacrifice. Then we take these facts and measure them in our hearts and consciences and we say: "It is true, because, in my conscience, it ought to be true." "It is true because my heart longs for it to be true." But this moral approval of our consciences, and this eagerness of our hearts toward the New Testament record is like a lever without a fulcrum if the reliability of the record is surrendered. An Incarnation of which we have not a reliable record, an Incarnation that was not recognized for two generations after it had occurred and passed off the stage of history, such an Incarnation is utterly unthinkable.

The author's position is fatal to Historic

Christianity, and the probability is that he fully recognizes this circumstance, for he definitely rejects the doctrine of justification by faith alone as the one and sufficient condition of salvation. But his position becomes the more objectionable to Christian faith when it is realized that it is not a scientific conclusion but simply a reconstruction of New Testament history by the principles of Darwinism. To reshape traditions, and to elaborate a complex theory of New Testament origins, in order that unacceptable items may be gotten rid of, and the whole brought into accord with one's own personal opinion as to how it should have occurred,—to do this, is certainly legitimate intellectual exercise, but it cannot by any stretch of the imagination be classified as scientific. Modern unbelief, indeed, wears scientific dress, but its body, its real self, is as subjective as unbelief ever was.

Anyone reading this book will at once recognize its evolutionary creed. But the author formulates the position for us on page 586 where he says, "The newer Biblical criticism, especially of Germany, and the evolutionary view of development, have found large acceptance in many of the most influential schools of ministerial training, and have wide following among the ministry, especially in the northern and eastern portions of the United States." Certainly the author does not say, here, that he shares this view, but he does not need to, for his book constantly enforces it. His point of view of history is steadily evolutionary and naturalistic.

Perhaps the baldest single statement in the book is that in which he rejects the Christian doctrine of salvation. He says, "The profundity and nobility of Luther's experience cannot be doubted. Yet its applicability as a universal test may be questioned. To him faith was a vital transforming power, a new and vivifying personal relationship. Many men, however, while sincerely desirous of serving God and their generation, have no such sense of personal forgiveness, no such soul-stirring depth of feeling, no such child-like trust. They desire, with God's aid, to do the best they can. For them 'justification by faith alone' is either well nigh meaningless, or becomes an intellectual assent to religious truth. To enter into the experience of Luther or of Paul is by no means possible for all."

The contrast is between the experience of justification on the one hand and the "desire, with God's aid, to do the best they can," on the other. If the desire, with God's aid, to do the best one can constitutes a man a Christian, then Paul was a Christian before his experience on the Damascus road, and Wesley before his in Aldersgate Street. Indeed, under such a definition Christianity becomes a mere system of ethical monotheism, in which Christ stands simply as the greatest teacher and exemplar. Indeed this is just what the author himself tells us is the drift of modern theology. He makes this statement in connection with an appreciation of Erasmus. He says that this great scholar of the Reformation period held to "a universal ethical theism having its highest illustration

in Christ." And then continues pointing out that "his way of thinking was to have little influence on the Reformation as a whole, though much on Socinianism, and is that represented in a great deal of modern theology of which he was the spiritual ancestor." p 330.

Certainly Professor Walker is correct in this statement. A great deal of modern theology is Socinian in its trend, its interest is not in Redemption and Justification, but in "a universal ethical theism having its highest illustration in Christ." And among other moderns who must be so classified is Professor Walker himself. His rejection of justification by faith alone, entirely apart from anything else, forces him into this position. There are only two possible ethical conceptions at the point of justification. One is justification by faith in Christ's redemption, and the other is justification by character. Professor Walker definitely places himself in the latter category when he speaks of men who cannot understand the experience of Luther or Paul, but who are Christians by virtue of a desire, with God's help to do the best they can.

And this tendency is constantly apparent in modern times. This is the position of Clarke, Brown, Bowne, and it is seriously confusing writers in the field of Psychology and Religious Pedagogy. The ritual of the Methodist Church was modified toward this position by the revision of 1916. We mention three items. The Revision Committee omitted the Apostles' Creed from the ritual of

adult baptism, they struck out the strong statement of original sin from both the baptismal rituals, they struck out similarly that beautiful question, "Have you saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?" from the ritual of reception into full membership. The Bishops later restored the Apostles' Creed, but the other omissions remain.

In place of the beautifully Christian question in the ritual for full membership, already quoted, the Revision Committee substituted this: "Do you receive Jesus Christ as your Savior, and confess him as your Lord and Master?" We will take time to point out four things.

1. The old question was incapable of any other than the historic interpretation. It referred to justification by faith alone, and put the emphasis upon salvation through vital believing relation with the Redeemer.

2. The new question, to say the best of it, weakens the expression of this redemptive truth. But the fact is that it does not necessarily express it at all. The Unitarian theologian does not object to calling Jesus, Savior. He is Savior as one who teaches us sublime, ethical and religious ideas. No redemptive reference is necessary in the word.

3. The old question is true to the New Testament, which makes the recognition of Jesus' lordship implicit in saving faith. Obedience and service is a fruit of faith and follows after justification. Salvation is by faith alone. Faith brings about a vital relationship at once ethical and supernatural, and good works follow after this experience as

inevitably as there is light when the sun is shining.

4. The old question and the new are both expressive of the theological consciousness that produced them. The old question was adopted fifty years ago when Justification was still seen as the centre of Christian belief. "Have you saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?" was a natural expression of theological consciousness at that time. But today Justification is being attacked, it is being attacked or omitted from a number of books in the present Course of Study. It is rejected or ignored by some of the men who were most prominent in accomplishing the revision of the ritual. It is but natural under such circumstances that the new question should greatly tone down the redemptive emphasis and stress not a justifying relationship, but a purpose of obedience.

But returning to Professor Walker's work, its attitude toward the supernatural is constantly halting. His own position is quite accurately expressed on page 491 where it is summed up about into this: "Since Hume's criticism, the question of miracles has been increasingly felt to be one of peculiar difficulty." In harmony with this idea the supernatural in the affairs of men is constantly slighted whenever it is referred to. St. Francis' divine call to his life work is not spoken of as a real supernatural contact, but as a mere impression that he believed had come from God. "He thought he heard the divine command to restore the fallen house of God."

Similarly Luther is delivered out of the hands of his enemies, not by a watchful providence that rules behind all human confusion, but simply by "the favorable turn of political events," and George Muller's Bristol orphanage was supported, "he believed," largely by direct answer to prayer. But the author's hostility to the idea of direct divine interference comes out even more definitely on pages 481 and 482 where he mentions several things in the life of the Reformation Church that link it rather with medievalism than with the modern world. Among these he lists original sin, other worldliness, and "the immediacy and arbitrariness of the divine relations with the world." It is interesting to note, also, in this connection, that the author does not accept the miracle of Jesus' resurrection as historical.

But the most serious criticism of this work, from the point of view of Historic Christianity, is that he makes the gospel an evolution of the first centuries, rather than the direct teaching of the incarnate Son of God. Christ did not originate the gospel that has been preached in his name for two thousand years. "Christianity came into no empty world, but one filled with religious, philosophical and institutional ideas. By them, especially on Gentile soil, the simple primitive truths of Christianity were profoundly modified, resulting in the theology and institutions of the Old Catholic Church." pp. 541-542.

This idea the author develops extensively in the first hundred and fifty pages of his

work. In the first forty-one he develops it as related to apostolic times, and in the next hundred as related to patristic times and on down to the times of the councils. In assigning work in this book, for students in the Course of Study, the Commission omitted the first forty-one pages. But this omission, while it does eliminate some of the balder statements of the author's position, does not omit the position. The student that begins to study his Church History on page forty-two begins immediately to learn that Jesus Christ did not give to the Church the Gospel that has been taught in his name, but that instead the simple, primitive truths he taught have been profoundly modified by Jewish and pagan influences. The paragraph already quoted in which the author says this is not from the front, but the back of the book.

But let us examine the author's evolutionary theory of Christian beginnings somewhat in detail. First of all he tells us that Jesus' own conception of his work enlarged. At the start he seemed to have regarded his kingdom "as for Jews only. As he went on his conception of its inclusiveness grew." (p. 20). He went to Jerusalem at the end, not with any purpose of giving his life there for the ransom of the world from the guilt of its sins, but because he felt, "that at whatever peril he must bear witness in Jerusalem." (p. 19). He did not actually rise from the dead, but his disciples did come to have a conviction that death was not the end of him. How this conviction developed "is

one of the most puzzling of historical problems." (p. 21). Paul is in large measure the creator of Christianity as the centuries have known it. He wrought into it "much that came from his own rabbinic learning and Hellenic experience." The author is deeply appreciative of Paul, "his profound Christian feeling lead him into a deeper insight into the mind of Christ than was possessed by any other of the early disciples." Paul as a Christian heart is profoundly at one with Christ; but "Paul the theologian is often at variance with the picture of Christ presented by the Gospels." p. 30.

But we can only understand this position when we know exactly what the author makes Paul's contribution to be. On page 31 he tells us that Paul's "degree of emphasis on Christ's death was certainly new." Similarly, Mark "knew nothing of Paul's view of Christ's pre-existence. In his thought Christ was from his baptism the Son of God by adoption." p. 37.

Matthew and Luke put the divine in Christ earlier, for them he was divine from his virgin birth, but they no more than Mark know anything of Paul's doctrine of a pre-existent Christ. p. 38.

But Paul himself seems to have come short of the theological completeness of John's Gospel, which bears marked traces of his influence. "Paul probably never in set terms called Christ, God." (p. 37). But in John's Gospel "a real though unexplained incarnation is taught: 'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.'" The Gospel and Epistles

which bear the name of John probably had their rise in Ephesus, where Paul had long taught. Its position is Pauline but developed. p. 40.

But Common Christianity in the Patristic Church, the period immediately following that of the apostles, had not risen to the level either of Paul's Gospel or that of the Johannine literature, it neither represented nor understood either of them. At this time Christianity amounted to little more than loyalty to Christ as the divine revealer of the true God and of a simple strenuous morality. p. 42.

This whole evolution of Christian truth is brought to a decisive climax at Nicaea, where through the influence of Constantine the Athanasian formulations were adopted. (p. 117). The doctrine of Christ's Deity is, then, not his own truth of himself clearly understood from his resurrection forward, but is an idea that gradually developed, and was finally fixed for Christian faith by the political influence of a pagan emperor whose chief interest was to preserve the unifying and stabilizing influences of the Church upon his dominions.

Beyond Nicaea the author carries the evolution of some of the lesser details of the Church's Christology, down as far as Chalcedon. Here he tells us it became fixed. He gives this evaluation of that final position: "It was true to the fundamental conviction of the church that in Christ a complete revelation of God is made in terms of a genuine human life." p. 152.

As we have read this very moderate appreciation of the conclusion of the great Christological controversy, which preserved Christianity as the faith of God Incarnate the Redeemer, we confess an uncertainty as to the author's position. He begins the story of Jesus with the ministry of John the Baptist, whom he refers to as, "in the thought of the early Christians the 'forerunner' of the Messiah." There is no reference to the virgin birth, the historical resurrection is rejected, the ascension is unmentioned. We need to notice too, the author's distinction between the teachings of Jesus and the teaching of his disciples about him. He separates these the one from the other, and makes the disciples personally responsible for the latter. What do all these things mean? Is the author a Trinitarian, does he believe in the pre-existent eternal Son, and in his literal Incarnation? Perhaps, though if he does, we cannot but feel, that he has taken a strange way of planning his history.

But whatever may be his position as to Christ's person, whether he is fully Christian, or somewhat Socinian in his drift, of this we are sure, he misrepresents the fundamental conviction of the primitive Church. As we have read the New Testament its fundamental conviction is that Jesus Christ is God made manifest in the flesh dying and rising again to redeem a race from the guilt of sin. Alongside of this the author's idea that Christ stood to the primitive Church simply as "a complete revelation of God in

terms of a genuine human life," looks meagre indeed.

We might call attention to the fact that Professor Faulkner, of Drew Theological Seminary, dissents from Professor Walker almost constantly in this whole discussion. He tells us in his review of this book in the *Christian Advocate*, August 21, 1919, after some complimentary remarks, that the book is "aggressively liberal." And then there follows a list of direct contradictions to Walker's positions. We will quote somewhat extensively from Dr. Faulkner's article. He says: "Paul the theologian is not 'often at variance with the picture of Christ' in the Gospels. The most that could be said is that he gives a more developed picture than, say, Mark. The Gospels are dated much too late. Fifty is a better date for Mark, and not long after sixty all the Gospels except John were probably in existence. According to the best manuscripts Paul does 'in set terms' call Christ God. Why say that Mark knew nothing of Christ's pre-existence? All we can say is that he does not teach it in so many words because that did not come within his scope. It is not true that Mark gives 'a very different interpretation' of Christ from Paul's. It is better to say that Mark gives no 'interpretation' only a story of facts told briefly for Romans. It is misleading to say that Matthew and Luke do not have 'Paul's doctrine of pre-existence.' Why should they have? They imply pre-existence, and their gospels need Paul's as a logical sequel. Probably eighty-five, ninety-five would be a

more correct date for John's Gospel, and the animus of that gospel is misconceived. John deliberately omits much in the others, but his picture of Christ is not another but a fuller."

This is Professor Faulkner's criticism of our author's treatment of Apostolic Christianity. We find him similarly opposed to the author's views with respect to Patristic Christianity, and the Church of the age of the great Councils. Dr. Faulkner's position can be found in his, "Crises of the Early Church," published in 1912. In this book he tells the story of one crisis in the early Church after another, and so reviews the entire field of primitive teaching.

His conclusion is that from the beginning and uninterruptedly the Church has recognized the Deity and Redemption of Christ. Nicaea but defined in philosophical language what had always been the vital faith of the Church. Athanasius won in that great fourth century controversy not because of the influence of the Emperor, but because he convinced the great majority of the delegates that his views were necessary to the adequate definition of their common faith. Professor Faulkner gives to the Church, as a result of his study of history, a reasonable basis for her faith. He makes Nicaea and Chalcedon philosophical definitions of the vital belief that was held continuously from the beginning, and that gained definite expression in Matthew, Mark and Luke as well as John and Paul, and that had come in the first place from Christ.

And with respect to the whole Patristic Church Prof. Faulkner definitely asserts that it held continuously this common Christian deposit. He mentions the fathers, beginning with those who knew the apostles: Polycarp, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Cyprian, and Athanasius.

In all this Professor Faulkner disclaims that he is an apologist, he is an historian. He is simply saying that the other view is poor history, no matter what may be its relation to Christian doctrine. But we want to point out again that Professor Walker's view is not only bad history, but from the Christian point of view it is destructive. The Incarnation must be surrendered, if his account and interpretation of New Testament and primitive Christian history is allowed to stand. If the Deity of Christ was never thought of until his figure had been gone from the stage of history for more than a generation, then it is unbelievable. The doctrine of his Deity is too big a conclusion to hang upon the slender thread of evidence he allows to us.

A Christ who began his work by trying to establish a little Jewish kingdom; whose ideas, only later, grew to universal dimensions; who never to the last purposed his death at Jerusalem, but went there only foreseeing its great probability; who was crucified, died and was buried, and of whom this is historically the end; who never taught his own pre-existence and God-hood,—that such a Christ at the end of half a century or

so should have come to be looked upon as God Incarnate is a view so out of proportion as to be impossible.

But this proposition does not adequately put the difficulty of the author's position. We need to add that according to Mark Christ was looked upon as an average human being who became in some sense divine by adoption at his baptism. That Matthew and Luke put behind his life a supernatural birth, and made him divine from the beginning. That Paul, who probably never saw him, and certainly never associated with him in his flesh, gave to the Church the belief of his pre-existence. And that an unknown writer, who had felt the influence of Paul, and who wrote in Ephesus about the beginning of the second century gave to it that of his essential Deity and Incarnation.

We only add that if this is the story of Christ, and if this is the history of belief in him as God Incarnate, then personally our faith in this truth is at an end. We surrender Historic Christianity from end to end. Professor Walker's position is Socinian. Whatever may be his personal estimate of the Savior the influence of his Church History is toward a human Christ, a Christ who might be the divinest of divine men, but no more.

We will not attempt to answer the question that must be in many minds, as to why the Commission on Courses of Study have put this book in the course for the training of Methodist preachers. Certainly they cannot excuse themselves on the ground that

the first forty-one pages of the book are not assigned for examinations: for the opinions set forth there are carried forward and completed later, in the sections that are assigned, and the later ideas absolutely presuppose the earlier propositions. Professor Walker's views are divergent from the point of view of Historic Christianity, and of Methodism. He doubtless would not hesitate a moment to admit the fact. His views may be acceptable for the liberal wing of Congregationalism, which has veered over toward Unitarian opinions, but they are not acceptable for Methodism, which is fixed unchangeably upon the foundation of historic belief. The action of the General Conference of 1920 at Des Moines made this perfectly clear; and the commission on Courses of Study was given the most definite instruction in regard to this matter.

But, in conclusion, whatever may be the explanation of how it has occurred, this is what has occurred. Under the present Courses of Study it is practically certain that none of the younger men coming into our ministry will get a view of Christian beginnings consistent with our established teachings and beliefs. (Of course our reference is entirely to those young men whose theological training is taken in the Conference courses.) Professor Walker's Church History, and Professor Rall's two books are the three books that deal in detail with this general field. If, being dissatisfied with Rall they turn to Walker, they are presented with an opinion, decidedly more radical and divergent.

Rall makes the virgin birth uncertain, Walker ignores it. Rall makes Paul and Luke differ as to the resurrection and ascension, Walker denies the first and ignores the second. Rall and Walker agree that Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a purpose other than to give his life a sacrifice for the sins of the world. They agree, too, in denying to St. John the authorship of the Gospel that bears his name, and in making this writing dependent upon Paul's influence. Neither of them accepts Redemption or Justification in the historic sense as established in Methodism. What is the young man to do? He is beginning his training. He is being introduced to fields of thought to which he is entirely a stranger. He has no foundation for a personal judgment. He has no choice but to believe what is set before him, or else to fight it by sheer will force and without other assistance. He has not even two views to choose between. Both the views that are presented to him are divergent, only one is more so.

This is the situation in which the new course of study is placing the young men of Methodism. What are they to do? They must study these books, and if they express their dissent they are likely to be told, as some of them have been told, that they must believe these things. They are even likely, if they persist in their refusal to accept such novel and destructive positions, to be ridiculed as upstarts venturing to differ with learned men. These things have already been done this very quadrennium since these

books were approved by the Board of Bishops last June.

Certainly we have no question as to the sincerity, spirituality or devotion of any of these authors. But neither have we any question of the sincerity, spirituality or devotion of Arius or of Channing, or of Cardinal Gibbons. But earnestness, spirituality and devotion in an author does not guarantee that his book will be an expression of Methodist Theology, and this is the only question under discussion. Walker's position is divergent from the point of view of Methodism and of Historic Christianity.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE MAIN POINTS.

By Charles Reynolds Brown.



CHARLES Reynolds Brown, is, as is generally known, the Dean of Yale School of Religion. His style as a writer is engaging and lucid. His little book, "The Main Points," is thoroughly readable. It is divided into eleven chapters covering:

1. The Divinity of Jesus Christ.
2. The Atonement.
3. The Work of the Holy Spirit.
4. The Authority of the Bible.
5. The Utility of Prayer.
6. The Question of Conversion.
7. Salvation by Faith.
8. The Christian Church.
9. The Hope of Immortality.
10. The Final Judgment.
11. The Use of a Creed.

Dr. Brown's book is not technical, it is written for the lay mind, and much that it says is said both well and finely. His attitude as to the Deity of Christ is positive; he is a Trinitarian; he recognizes fully both the personality and works of the Holy Spirit; he treats prayer as a real force, God responds to it, it does things, nature's laws do not shut God outside his own world.

But upon Atonement, the authority of the Bible, upon justification by faith, and upon Conversion, the author comes decidedly short of the full Christian position. His attitude, also, upon the final judgment is hesitating. He presents arguments for and against three views: that of the universalist, that of the annihilationist, and that of those who hold to the eternity of rewards and punishments. The only conclusion of his book is to leave the whole matter open. His own inclination, it would seem, is toward the view which makes rewards and punishments eternal, but he does not definitely accept this teaching.

The careful reader of this important chapter of Dr. Brown's work will doubtless feel a keen disappointment. He will probably be inclined to the opinion that the author could have done something much stronger with the Biblical and credal items he accepts, if only he had taken more time. For example, he might have related to his problem the great conception advanced by Professor Olin Alfred Curtis in his volume, "The Christian Faith," namely, that in the instant of death all the choices of life sweep before self-consciousness for final review, and that there each man finally finishes and closes his life's attitude toward Christ and his salvation. This one tremendous idea has the most far-reaching bearing upon every objection to the idea of a final judgment. Before it every moral objection, such as these offered by the author, melts away as snow under the rays of the tropical sun. That Dr. Brown makes

no use of such a deeply penetrating idea, and is so easily satisfied to leave the important truth of the future prospect for the wicked entirely enshrouded in mystery, argues probably, that his chapter was hurriedly prepared.

But we turn now to the consideration of our real criticisms of this engaging book, namely, its defective position as to the Atonement, as to Justification by Faith, as to the authority of the Bible, and as to Conversion. Upon each of these truths Dr. Brown takes about the familiar "liberal" position.

First the Atonement. In handling the Atonement Dr. Brown first outlines three theories that have been offered to explain it, namely, that it was a moral satisfaction, that it was a governmental expediency that it was a moral influence upon the hearts of sinful men. These three he says cover the ground in this section of our traditional theology. All three he rejects. The first is unjust, the second is a make-shift, the third is superficial. Then for quite a space he presents arguments in support of this negative position. He says, "If there were barriers on God's part which demanded the death of an innocent victim before forgiveness could be extended to the penitent, Jesus does not seem to know about them." p. 37. Again he says, "The very words 'reconciliation,' 'atonement,' 'propitiation,' 'justification,' never occur in the four Gospels at all." p. 40. He argues that the sacrificial ritual of the Old Testament cannot be the antitype of Christ's cross because

"the choicer spirits of the Old Testament knew the mind of God sufficiently to see that he forgave men then, not on account of the bloody sacrifice, but on account of their penitence and faith." p. 41.

The author finally concludes by offering this as the interpretation of the idea of the atonement. That Christ's suffering for us was like that of Hosea's in his effort to save his fallen wife, suffering that was simply incidental to the practical expedients he made use of to accomplish her recovery. Christ did not go to the cross to accomplish anything for us. His cross was not a divine purpose. It was simply something incidental. His purpose was only to preach and teach God's holy love, to be loyal to this ministry at any cost, and to win us from sin.

In harmony with this idea he finds the analogy of Christ's suffering in the physician who "robs himself of sleep, hurries through his meals, carries the anxieties of a hundred households at a time and dies all too soon, having laid his life on the altar of the community's improved health." Then follows a list of other self-sacrifices. School teachers in their sacrifice of nerve force, railroad engineers in various relations, parents in giving up their larger comforts for the education of their children. "All this," says the author, "is of the nature of atonement." p. 50.

We hardly need to point out that all this is as remote from the New Testament atonement as an ant hill is from a mountain peak. Any one familiar with the teaching of Jesus

or of his apostles will feel this instantly. Nor do we need to point out that it is equally remote from the position of the great Church formularies. These all define the atonement as a propitiation, as the basis of justification. And these words are New Testament words, whether they are Gospel words or not. But what is this? Can the Church allow a distinction between its Gospels and its Epistles? Certainly it cannot, if it means to preserve any doctrine of inspiration worth keeping.

But then, too, the ideas conveyed by these words are Gospel ideas. In all four Gospels Jesus is pictured as having foreseen his cross from the beginning, and as having approached it not simply as foreseeing it, but also as fore-purposing it. He went to Jerusalem to give his life a ransom for many. His blood was for the remission of sins.

All the New Testament writers look upon the cross of Christ as an ethical achievement that makes possible the forgiveness of sins. It is a propitiation for sins. It stands as the completed work of redeeming love, in which divine righteousness finds full expression, so that God is, as St. Paul said, perfectly true to his righteousness and is yet the justifier of them that believe on Jesus.

Let us set forth the contrasts between this view and that of the author. The New Testament makes Christ's cross an amazing thing, an achievement of isolated grandeur. Dr. Brown stands it simply as one among many sacrifices. The New Testament makes the cross a divine purpose. Dr. Brown

makes it purely incidental. The New Testament finds in the cross a note of awful ethical majesty, something that harmonizes with earthquake and thunder, with suffering and death. Dr. Brown finds in it nothing of the kind. The New Testament sees in the cross a sufficient salvation for all men, however helpless and guilty, who become united by a personal attitude of self-abandoning trust to the sublime divine and human personality who suffered and died there for them. Its message is the glad cry, "Look and live." But Dr. Brown sees in the cross only a supreme devotion that can help us only as we imitate its splendor in our lives.

So much for the author's conception of the Atonement. We now pass to its ideas concerning salvation by faith. In the past "salvation by faith" and "justification by faith" have been used as synonymous expressions. But "liberal" theology has dropped the latter, and uses the former because it can empty out of it all forensic and redempational ideas. Justification by faith cannot mean anything but that we are in some way separated from the guilt of our sins by the sacrifice of Christ. But salvation by faith can mean that by an attitude of general trustfulness toward God we get the benefit of personal relationship to him. It is in this more generalized and less ethical sense that the expression is used in current "liberal" theology; and it is thus that the author uses it here. Faith is, then, for the author, a trust in the general goodness of God. It is not at all a trust in anything that

Christ achieved for us upon the cross. It is not necessary that we should point out the wide divergence between the two views.

The author's illustrations of saving faith are such as Jean Valjean and his faith in the Bishop of D., the Old Testament sentence, "thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it," the parable of the Prodigal Son, and Jesus' treatment of Zacchaeus. But does it need to be pointed out that the New Testament plumbs vastly deeper into the ethical love of God than the Old, or that the parable of the Prodigal Son is a story of the love of God and not at all a discussion of the ethical processes of the divine love in forgiving sin? Similarly in Jesus' treatment of Zacchaeus and other sinners in the Gospels we see simply the fact of forgiveness, and not at all its ethical foundation. The Gospels do, however, give abundant expression to this ethical foundation, as every one familiar with the New Testament knows.

One other consideration. Man's moral and spiritual faculties are, according to Christianity, abnormal through the fall. "Liberal" opinions would say they are not completely evolved, that man is only in the process of becoming moral. Very well then, in either case we must expect that our moral judgments will be found to be blunted and defective. It is not to be wondered at, then, that our sense of the awfulness of sin is sadly short; that we cannot understand the earthquake and the pestilence; that we find it difficult to see why God cannot forgive

easily, out of hand; or why he needs to take the whole sin penalty up into his own life in order that he may freely justify sinners. It takes an artist fully to understand an artist. It takes ethical holiness fully to trace the ethical purposes of God. Certainly, the matter is perfectly clear, the Christian religion is God's revelation, not man's discovery; and its deepest truths are even yet beyond our easy comprehension. We glimpse them rather than see them fully. It is presuming for us as individuals to reject by our marred standards some revelation of God. The test of God's word is with the more manifold powers of the generations.

In this conception we have a good basis for our criticism of the author's view of the Bible. He regards it, certainly, as containing a divine revelation, and as being indeed the book of books. And the general outline of his thought, that there is in the Bible an increasing revelation coming to its fulness in Christ, will doubtless be universally admitted. The epistle to the Hebrews gives the same idea. God had spoken to man in many times and forms, but finally he had spoken in his Son. But the author's view of Scripture is nevertheless halting. Even at the climax of revelation in Christ, the apostles are presented as having failed perfectly to "apprehend the mind of Christ as it stands at last revealed in the Gospels." (p. 89). And we are told that men are to be invited "to read the Scriptures and make discriminations, deciding that this passage is the absolute truth of God and the other is due to the

human limitation of the writer," and again that "Every man must decide many points for himself, with the best light obtainable, but at his own risk." (pp. 93-95). Doubtless the author has exercised this right in deciding that the Old Testament sacrificial ritual was not a divine revelation pre-figuring Christ's cross, and that the New Testament doctrines of the Atonement and of Justification are misconceptions of God's perfect love due probably to the human limitation of the writers.

Every careful and serious thinker must realize that man needs a better revelation than this which the author offers to him. Such a book is not sufficient to be his rule of faith and practice. Instead it needs to be corrected by man's fallible intellect, conscience and heart. Nor is such an errant book worthy to stand in contact with the Incarnation. By the author's principles we do not know when we are in touch with the real mind of Christ, except as our own consciences and hearts approve the record. Jesus wrote nothing. We know him only through what his disciples caught of his truth. If what they caught and wrote is miscolored or distorted by their human limitations in the Epistles it is also in the Gospels. It is difficult to believe in a divine Incarnation of which God himself was so careless as to its preservation.

In Historic Christianity the Bible is very much more than a book of mingled truth and error to be accepted only in so far as it meets with approval by the individual conscience.

It is an authoritative book, certified in manifold ways. It is certified by its history, by its supernatural pre-visions and their fulfillments, by its appeal to the conscience and heart of humanity across the centuries, by its teleology, by the crowning of its teleology in Christ, and supremely by the fact that its literature nourished his spiritual life and that he accepted it as the Word of God.

The Christian Bible with its increasing purpose, crowned in the New Testament is the rule of faith and practice for all believers. It cannot be allowed that our blunted moral and spiritual faculties shall sit in judgment upon its truths.

And now turning, finally, to the matter of Conversion, we find that the author's position here is also defective. The careful reader of Dr. William Newton Clarke's Theology will be impressed by the fact that his feeling is often richer than his definitions. One catches deeper emotional values in his paragraphs than he ever formulates. The same is true of Dr. Brown. And it is true of him in this chapter on Conversion. There are a number of sentences in which the author affirms that God gives new life to faith, and yet his whole point of view comes far short of the Christian truth of man's fall and need of supernatural regeneration.

The author presents Jesus as teaching that all men have in varying degrees gone wrong, but there is nowhere in his volume a suggestion that man is deeply abnormal in his whole moral and spiritual life, and that he can only be rescued from this depravity

by a great supernatural salvation. Instead Conversion is defined as "The total change of purpose and direction in the life of the man." (p. 128). Similarly the Prodigal Son is converted when he comes home. (p. 135.) Or again, "It is the part of every one to meet the Father in his house, at his table, to speak to him in prayer; and on the whole wide field of human effort to strive to do the Father's will. This is being born again, this is entering upon Christian life. In all this the man is aided by that spirit of grace which is not far from anyone of us when once we invite his help." p. 136.

Manifestly, then, Conversion in this volume is simply a divinely assisted purpose to do right. No wonder the author says on page 127 that he does not intend to ask Calvin, Wesley, or Bunyan what it is.

We would ask the reader to present to himself two questions: First, did not Jesus and his apostles sadly misexpress and exaggerate the truth here if the author's view is correct? Jesus said, that which was born of the flesh was only flesh. He also said that men had to be born again of the Spirit before they could so much as discern the Kingdom. And St. Paul said that to be in Christ was to be a new creation. Human experience, even in the case of those who have never gone into outbreaking sins, abundantly confirms this Biblical statement. St. Paul himself is an illustration of it, and so is Luther and Wesley.

But second, Dr. Brown's idea of Conversion might as well have been built upon the

truth of the Shepherd Psalm as upon the teaching of Jesus. There is no truth of divine watchcare and fatherliness expressed in Jesus' teaching that is not richly present in the Shepherd Psalm. Why, then, did not the writing of that psalm produce the New Testament dispensation? The fact of history is that Pentecost did not follow the writing of the Shepherd Psalm, but that it waited for Jesus to die, to rise again from the dead, and to ascend into heaven. What is the explanation of this delay?

It will not do to say that it was the difference between an idea and a life that made the difference between the influence of the Shepherd Psalm and the teaching of Jesus, for Jesus' revolutionary influence failed entirely until he had ceased to be a life and had become, humanly speaking, a mere memory. There is no reasonable explanation for the epochal fact of Pentecost but the Christian belief that Jesus' cross, resurrection, and ascension achieved something, and made possible the rich outpouring of the Spirit; a thing impossible until after the Atonement was completed. Manifestly, then, Conversion is no mere divine help in doing right such as Old Testament saints enjoyed, it is something vastly deeper. Jesus expressed it in this contrast: that before Pentecost the Spirit had been among men, but that from Pentecost forward he should dwell within men.

The Christian Church will gain nothing by compromising with the naturalistic tendency of the times. In the Bible depravity is a universal abnormality of man's whole

moral and spiritual life, and salvation is a great supernatural deliverance involving Conviction for sin, Justification, Regeneration, and Sanctification. Christianity is the truth, and Christianity must be kept what the ages with one voice conceived it to be. Peter and John, Paul and Bernard, Luther and Wesley were right.

## CHAPTER XIII.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF SOCIOLOGY  
BY WM. D. HAYES.

 PROF. Hayes' book carries on its title page the statement that the author is Professor of Sociology in the University of Illinois. It is rather a large volume containing some seven hundred pages. It goes into the subject of Sociology deeply and chiefly from the theoretical point of view. It shows wide research and broad learning. Its fundamental belief, however, is Darwinism, and this fact would make it impossible for the book to be sympathetic with the Christian and Biblical point of view.

It would seem that so extreme and theoretical a work as Professor Hayes' would be more adapted for a university course in which the student was planning to specialize in this subject than for a text book in a course for ministerial training. The minister needs practical ideas in Sociology. Of course no book that undermines the minister's own Christian interpretation of life can help him. In the Church, Christ, not Darwin, is the final authority as to belief; and a book that substitutes Darwin for Christ cannot be helpful.

The reader of Professor Hayes' book ought to be equipped with enough independ-

ent scientific information to know when the author is setting forth real scientific certainties and when he is setting forth mere personal beliefs. A belief is one thing, and a scientific demonstration is another. A belief does not become science even by its general acceptance in scientific circles. Darwinism was once so accepted, and today it is not. A belief only becomes science, in the sense of authoritative, when it has been demonstrated by real data.

But, coming to Professor Hayes' position more in detail. Our objection to his book from the Christian point of view is that in philosophy he is a Darwinian, in ethics he is a utilitarian, and that in his attitude toward the supernatural, which he brings into his discussion in his treatment of the evolution of religion, he is halting if not actually hostile.

For Professor Hayes the case is closed. Man is an evolution from lower animals; and even his moral nature finds a similar explanation. Man is from two hundred to five hundred thousand years old. (p. 454). His ancestry is probably an extinct form of ape (p. 461), that is, the present ape and he have a common ancestry. Indeed the author tells us that biologically man is closer to the old world apes than these are to the apes of South America, and that it is chiefly social evolution that has raised men above the brute world. (p. 462). He speaks of a period of evolution when the human mind was about equal to that of a two-year old child. He says that these men were superior to the

highest animals chiefly in that they possessed better organs of articulation. (p. 511).

He asserts that toward the close of the period of biological evolution, social evolution began, and that this continued after man became fixed as a species. During these periods man survived in the struggle for existence because of social rather than of physical superiority. (pp. 279ff, 512). He then carries forward man's social evolution, under which he included the development of conscience. Conscience is a product of social interaction upon the individual. Social utility is the principal factor, although the parental and altruistic instincts are also factors. Thus, he says, that each man's self interest makes him alert against anyone who does something that, if done to him, would hurt him. The interest is selfish, but the result is a useful folk sense, a moral value. (p. 546). He, of course, rejects the Kantian doctrine of a categorical imperative. (p. 549). He says, "Biological evolution has gone only part way toward furnishing us with a conscience. Moreover there seems to be little or no ground for hope that the in-born esthetic equipment for moral discrimination will ever become more complete, for we cannot see any effective natural selection weeding out those who are in this respect less fit." (p. 544). His statement of all the factors in the evolution of conscience include the following: sense of pleasure and pain, reason, altruism, esthetic discrimination, imitation, radiation and desire for approval. He concludes: "Conscience, instead of being

any single faculty may be far more truly regarded as the net result of the individual and social reactions of all man's faculties upon the problem of conduct." (p. 545; see also pp. 442, 462, 512, 541, 226).

After having finished the explanation of conscience by evolution the author next explains inspiration, answers to prayer and miracles by the evolved powers of the mind. (pp. 565-569). Inspiration is an upgush from the rich treasure and constant activity of the subconscious mind. This is the explanation of inspiration in art, and in this "respect as in certain others, religious revelation resembles art." Similarly prayer tends to answer itself because the eager expectancy of believing prayer is favorable to upspringings from the subconscious mind. The visions of the dying have a like explanation. In the condition of mental disturbance attending dissolution, beliefs are likely to visualize themselves. Miracles also are all explained. They are nothing but the power of mind over body. The sick man cures himself by expecting health. The author does not mean anything like so called Christian Science, but simply that the mental attitude controls the organ that is not functioning and starts it functioning again. Whether or no he would explain Jesus' miracles by this idea we cannot say. No more can we say whether the author means to exclude all overpowering experiences of the Holy Spirit when he classifies some as being identical with the extravagances of heathenism. But when we realize that he is discussing in this

section the evolution of religion, his failure to note any exception is significant.

One further matter, social utility seems to be the one major idea of the author. He never presents anything larger. The idea of reasoned conduct controlled with a view to social utility seems, even, to be his ideal. Jesus' Golden Rule he regards exclusively as a guide for outward action toward social ends, and not at all as an expression of inner love. (p. 592). Similarly, the administration of justice by the courts should be built entirely upon the basis of social utility rather than on primitive man's feeling of retribution, a feeling that the modern man is outgrowing. (p. 613ff). This tendency of the author's thought toward reasoned practical utility, rather than toward instinctive life in free manifestation is another incidental mark of the great contrast between his views and those of the Bible and Christianity. But our criticisms follow so we forbear at this point.

Before concluding this series of discussions we want to consider more carefully the present status of Darwinism; but at the present time we need to point out that Professor Hayes' ideas such as man's origin from some lower animal, his antiquity at two hundred thousand years or more, the period when he had the mind of a two-year-old child, are all of them non-scientific beliefs that the author holds by personal choice, and indeed, in the face of a mass of contrary evidence. It is interesting to remember in this connection, that Andrew

Martin Fairbairn in his philosophy of the Christian Religion asserts that the most of what the anthropologist tells us of the life of the prehistoric man is pure imagination. And Dr. Fairbairn's statement is the more significant when we stand Dr. Hayes' view, for example, that there was a period when man had the mind of a two-year-old child, along side of the fact that the older skulls are larger rather than smaller than those of the present time. Of course it is possible that those larger skulls housed inferior mentality, but what is the evidence for such a condition?

We have three criticisms of the author's point of view here. First, he offers it as a science, when it is simply a creed. Second, his view, his creed, does violence to the moral intuitions of the soul. Third, his view contradicts the Christian truth of man's sin, fall and resulting race wide depravity.

But more serious far is the author's attitude with respect to conscience and the whole moral field. The sublime conception of everlasting righteousness is unceremoniously thrown out, and moral ideas are reduced to nothing but esthetic preference and social utility. What deep violence this does to man's moral intuitions every one knows, who has at all lived or thought below the surface of things. The moral ideal, the everlasting righteousness of God, is, for the Christian believer, a sublime light that lightens every human soul. That light has been dimmed by depravity, certainly, but it nevertheless is a reality. When the author sacrifices this he sacrifices the soul of life.

But passing on, it is interesting to notice how easily he asserts that custom can make anything right. Fairbairn by a deeper study of the same class of facts shows that behind social approval there is the deeper disapproval of conscience. And David Livingstone says that with the exception of polygamy and cannibalism he never found the African conscience holding right for wrong, or wrong for right. The lay mind has here a difference of authorities, and can take its choice. And the moral explanation of cannibalism, which is a phenomenon to be classified along side of the so-called "ethical dualism," (the idea that there are different moral standards, one applying to relations at home, and the other to relations with strangers) and the still persisting sense of race prejudice, must be sought for in that dimming of the light of conscience which was incident to the fall of man. Certain it is no one will deny that deep in the Christian conscience there is today a sense of universal brotherhood, and that in the loftier reaches of Christian experience this sense becomes an actual social force; yet the average believer is far from realizing this ideal in his actual life. It is evident that in the Christian life itself we have an illustration of social approval when more deeply the inner voice of conscience utters disapproval.

In the author's attitude toward conscience, we find again, a personal creed, not science. But his point of view here is fatal to Christianity. If conscience is only the

voice of social utility; if sin is not something that has guilt and deserves retribution; if retribution is not a fundamental ethical instinct, but instead only a primitive idea that had a certain social value in making possible the survival of the fittest and evolution—if these things are true, then as well make an end of the Bible at once. These ideas can no more be eliminated from the Bible, than leaves can be eliminated from a forest. Utilitarianism in ethics is as foreign to the Christian view of things as Atheism. The Biblical deity is no more fundamentally eternal reality and infinite cause than he is eternal righteousness. He is ethically aflame, righteousness is not a utility to the Biblical writers, it is a consuming personal passion. As Jesus said, man cannot live save as he is in constant touch with the divine holy will, with the divine ethical words. Darwinism contradicts Christianity at every point, but at no point more fatally than when man's moral life is robbed of authority and made a mere product of social evolution and utility.

We hardly need to offer any criticism of the author's view of Inspiration, answered prayer and miracles. Everyone will immediately realize that his explanations are not science but creed, and that they are fatal to the Biblical supernatural. It is rather amusing to hear one talk so positively of the subconscious. Doubtless we know about as much of the subconscious mind and its processes as we knew about the North Pole when we were saying that it would be an open sea and the rest. What springs up out

of the subconscious mind may as well be poured into it by the supernatural Spirit, for all we know to the contrary. The writer who says it is not, is asserting a creed, not speaking scientifically. But if religious inspiration is an upspringing from the subconscious mind having no supernatural explanation, whence the uniqueness of the Hebrew revelation? And why are we not still producing revelational literature on a level with the New Testament? Similarly prayer; who can say that answer to prayer is from man's own stored up resources rather than from deity? And in as much as the one is, to say the least, as probable as the other, why not take the one that is morally and spiritually the richer? And again, how does the author know that death-bed visions are not true contacts with the spirit world, which if a reality must be all about us? How does he know that they are nothing but confused ideas of a mind in the midst of dissolution, or a visualization created by the subconscious powers in response to the anxious eagerness of the passing soul. We cannot forbear remarking that we would hate such a God as the one who could rule in Professor Hayes' universe. A God who is as unknowable as Spencer's great Unknown, a God who allows us to be deceived by our own subconscious powers, a God who does not come near us even in death, a God whose little utilitarian universe is too small to receive our respect not to say our admiration.

If Professor Hayes is on the track of truth, then there is no truth and life be-

comes a puppet show. If righteousness is not the everlasting flame of being, if conscience is not the dimmed but burning light of life, if there is nothing higher than that which works to produce painlessness, nothing more majestic and inspiring than social utility, if prayer is unanswered or answered only by auto-reaction, if death is unlighted, if humanity has only reached this level of futility at the end of from two to five hundred thousand years of meaningless tears and blind despair then Schopenhauer is right and the truth of life is pessimism.

But thank God, Professor Hayes is not writing science, he is writing a personally chosen creed, which has, to say the best of it, no more claim to our consideration than the great historic creeds of our sublime Christianity. We go with James Orr. It is historic Christianity with its sublime supernatural or Pessimism. He chose Christianity and so do we. What place this negative, naturalistic volume can have in a course of study for Methodist preachers we utterly fail to see. That it has scarcely any point of contact with Christ or his Gospel must be apparent to every one.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### OUTLINE OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

By Professor William Newton Clark.

 T will be generally conceded that Dr. Clarke's volume is one of the most readable of theological writings. In this respect it is comparable to Professor Curtis', "The Christian Faith" which the writer found as fascinating as Ruskin's essays, or Victor Hugo's fiction. In reading either Clarke or Curtis there is no sense of mental fatigue, both books throb with real living passion.

But there is this notable difference between them. Curtis' book is modern. He speaks to the modern man interpreting to him the changeless Gospel of the centuries, the Gospel incarnate Deity gave to a lost world. Curtis does not tone down Historic Christianity. He believes it, and relates it to all that is either scientific or demonstrable in modern thought. He keeps an authoritative Bible (though he does not teach the verbal inspiration theory), an objective atonement, a fallen race, and a great supernatural salvation.

Clarke's book on the other hand is not truly modern. His position is neither that of the modern liberal thinker, nor that of Historic Christianity. His volume has the position of a sort of text book among the more conservative liberals. It is, from the

Christian point of view, defective as to the Bible, the Trinity, the Fall, the Atonement, Justification, the Second Coming of Christ.

On the Trinity his position is an approach toward Sabellianism. He rejects the full personality of the several distinctions of the Godhead, and reduces them to three modes in one mental process. The Father is God knowing, the Son is God knowing himself, the Spirit is God knowing of himself as himself. (See pages 170-174).

This idea only has the appearance of clearness. The fact is, it surrenders the New Testament position, that the Godhead is a tri-unity of personalities. Nothing less than full self-consciousness in each distinction of the Godhead can explain the New Testament facts. If the Son is not a self-conscious personality from eternity and to eternity, then he could not have laid aside the divine glory, and have become incarnate through the womb of the Virgin.

Professor Lewis, of Drew Theological Seminary, in his recent paper on the Trinity has, we believe, made a very notable contribution, in his suggestion, that personality is an incomplete idea, and that the real unity is the society of personalities. God would thus be three in personality though one in being; and his unity would be at once metaphysical and ethical. He would be one in his eternal spiritual substance or essence, and one, also, by the eternal law of his holiness.

But not to linger upon this matter, which is too involved for the brief discussions we are undertaking, we point out that Dr.

Clarke's view is not Trinitarian, and that it would make impossible a true Incarnation. The best Incarnation that he could consistently have on the basis of his view would be a human personality divinely endued in a most wonderful way. As a matter of fact, Clarke does not seem to have been hesitating as respects the Incarnation. It is interesting, however, to observe that those who have followed this liberal lead are quite frequently rejecting a true Incarnation. Take this as an illustration. It is from an article by Dr. J. C. Arbuckle, of Columbus, Ohio, in the *Arena* of the *Methodist Review* for January, 1922. He says: "In the matter of pre-existence, if self-conscious being is implied, then being born of a woman is utterly inconceivable." This sentence would seem to imply that the eternal personality of the Son,—for one cannot have personality without self-consciousness—is no longer acceptable to some of the "liberal" thinkers. We could give several other illustrations but we must pass on.

Upon the subject of depravity, Professor Clarke is an evolutionist of the extreme type. He looks upon humanity as gradually evolving from the beasts. Thus he writes (on page 240ff): "The race was born with passions of animalism and self-will that were not sinful until the higher life of the spirit had become developed." Then he continues, "through the consent of the human will to the now, abnormal rule of the lower powers, what had before been innocent passed into sin." He calls attention to the pos-

sibility of interpreting man's sinfulness in two ways, and sets forth that, "According to the first of these views, sin entered by a fall from original goodness; according to the second, sin entered through man's failure to rise into his normal life." But all of the weight of Professor Clarke's own opinion is put back of the evolutionary view. For him humanity has not fallen; simply it did not rise. Holding this evolutionary theory Clarke hopes for a development of humanity, in some future generation, out of its present sinful condition. That all this is anti-Biblical does not need to be pointed out; nor does it need to be pointed out, here, again, how utterly superficial is this view of sin and depravity. Manifestly, Clarke was captivated by the plausibility and vogue of Darwinism; and accepted its conclusions without a thorough consideration of their ethical significance. The deeper study of sin and depravity will show that the trouble is not a matter of animal tendencies but of spiritual self-intoxication. If lust and appetite were the only sins then animal tendencies might explain them. But for the sins of pride some other explanation must be sought. Anyone who has appreciated Jesus' severer condemnation of proud-hearted Phariseeism than of harlotry will know where he puts the center of gravity in his discussion of sin. But here is our brief conclusion: Professor Clarke's view of sin is out of harmony with the Biblical doctrine and with the facts of life.

On the remaining defects of the book we

will let Professor John Alfred Faulkner, Professor of Church History at Drew Theological Seminary, speak. His criticism of Clarke's work appeared in the *Methodist Review* of January, 1917. After some introductory account of the book and appreciation of the author, Professor Faulkner says, that Clarke's chief departures from Historic Christianity are as follows: 1. "His doctrine of Scripture. Here he is Ritschian. The Bible is simply a record of revelation and serves all essential purposes when it is trustworthy, like Ridpath's History." 2. "His Doctrine of Atonement. His fear of Scripture is nowhere more clearly seen than in his explaining away the Biblical ideas of atonement. Even the great word propitiation he whittles away till it means almost nothing—a word that is the very heart of the Bible doctrine. His doctrine simmers down to the moral influence theory. Unlike Christ and Paul, Clarke sees nothing in the eternal veracities of God which called for the eternal atonement. He follows Ritschl in making the center of God's nature love only, which means that we have no God worthy of the name." 3. "His Doctrine of Justification. In harmony with the Scriptural doctrine of atonement as ransom, or propitiation or substitution (of course spiritually and ethically conceived), is the New Testament idea of justification by faith as a declaring righteous of the sinner for his faith on account of Christ and his work. Following his treatment of Bible and atonement and his Ritschian trend, Clarke harks back partly to Schleiermacher and partly to Ca-

tholicism on justification, making it dependent on the new life and subsequent to it. Not only does this overturn the whole New Testament idea of the salvation of sinners, but if Luther and Wesley had had this idea we would still have been living in the Middle Ages.” 4. “His Doctrine of the Last Things. In this general drift it is not surprising that Clarke denies both the Second Coming, which is declared in the Bible much more clearly and emphatically than the First Coming was, and the eternal punishment of the lost, which was almost axiomatic with Christ. This is due to the slight hold which Scripture has with our author and the strong hold which ‘modern opinion’ has with him.”

We add a further word. It is interesting to notice that Wesley in his sermon on Justification by Faith specifically rejects Clarke’s opinion. Clarke says on page 407, that “justification implies and rests upon the beginning of the new divine life in man.” And again, that when “the man has come by God’s grace to be in relation to God where and what he ought to be, God, whose judgment is according to the truth, recognizes the reality, and looks upon him as an accepted man.” But Wesley, on the contrary, says that justification is pardon, that sinners are those who are justified, and that they are justified when they are sinners, not needing to wait until they have been sanctified. The “liberals” generally have lost entirely this great Christian doctrine. Should the Church follow them it will quickly lose its power to save, and become a mere ethical culture society with good intentions but no evangel.

## CHAPTER XV.

### SOME MINOR ITEMS.



HE preceding chapters have completed our major criticisms. There are, however, three items remaining to which we would refer briefly, before turning to some constructive matter with which we wish to close our consideration of the Course of Study.

First, there is Dr. Washington Gladden's book, "The Christian Pastor and the Working Church." While this is a comprehensive work, and has many excellences, we must nevertheless, classify it as rationalistic in its sympathies. Dr. Gladden's acceptance of the "advanced" point of view is not stressed; but it does find repeated expression in his pages. We will notice one or two items.

Dr. Gladden evidently wrote under a double misapprehension: one that evolution is really an established conclusion in science; the other that criticism's "assured results" are truly assured. He adjusts his volume to both ideas. Thus he writes on page 338: "It is a time of transition in theological opinion; the great philosophical conceptions which underlie the theory of evolution enter into all our theological thinking and modify many of the statements of doctrine with which we have become familiar. Perhaps one reason why the careful instruction of

the young has been omitted is that the ancient catechisms no longer represent the best thought of the Church, and the pastor is not able to see how he can adjust his teaching to these formularies." Similarly on page 180 he writes: "The tremendous advance of the physical sciences, the rise of the philosophy of evolution, the prevalence of the method of historical criticism, have made necessary a restatement of many of the doctrines of religion, and have swept the foundations from beneath the feet of multitudes who have not had time to adjust themselves to these rapid movements of mind." On page 236 the author affirms that criticism has rendered untenable much of the older idea of revelation, and that the Sunday school teacher should be equipped with the new point of view and should teach it in the Sunday school classes. On page 399 the author speaks of child nature as "a natural gift for the formation of a Christian character, but a gift to be called forth, developed, guided." And the context of this statement is a rejection of the Christian doctrine of Depravity. In putting the historic doctrine he means to reject, he of course puts it in an extreme form. But this is such a common procedure among the "advanced" writers that the reader must not be confused by it. It is not simply some extravagant putting of the doctrine of Depravity that is antagonized and rejected by the current "liberal" theology, it is any putting of it. Any state of spiritual abnormality deep seated enough to explain Jesus' statement that life can only discern the things of the

Kingdom when it is new born, whether it be defined as "partial" or "total" Depravity is decisive against the author's idea that Christian character is to be produced on the basis of natural equipment by means of training. Coe is right when he says that the Christian doctrines of Depravity and Regeneration are in the way of the modern theory of development. It might be well to remind ourselves here that Jesus Christ was not an evolutionist, although the theory had already been taught in his day. For him humanity was sinful and fallen, redeemable only by a great supernatural deliverance at once ethical and dynamic. It is ethical in Justification. It is dynamic in Regeneration. The modern development theory, which denies Depravity, Justification and Regeneration, has nothing in common with Jesus save an admiration for his ethics and for his conception of God as Father. We will not repeat here the discussion we developed earlier when considering books in the field of Religious Psychology and Pedagogy, but the matter is so important that we will set forth a contrasted statement of the Christian and the so-called "liberal" views.

Christianity is self despairing; "liberal" Theology is self poised. Christianity, abandoning all confidence in self and centering all hope in Christ develops in the heart a deep and humble gratitude; "liberal" Theology does not and cannot develop this attitude. Christianity with its doctrine of Atonement is ethically intense, majestic, and yet wondrously gracious; "liberal" Theology has

grace only at the cost of ethical majesty and depth. In Christianity the central idea is justification by faith, its whole doctrinal system heads up into the idea of lost man's ethical trust in Christ crucified and risen again as his all-sufficient Saviour; "liberal" Theology on the contrary heads up into man's self-poised effort at service, and faith comes in only as a general confidence in the fatherly goodness of God.

One of the delegates at the recent Methodist Ecumenical in London put it quite comprehensively, when he said, "We are substituting the fatherhood of God for the justification by faith of our fathers." It is true, we are; and the two ideas are not equivalent either ethically or psychologically.

So much for Dr. Gladden's book. It is in many respects a great work, though its point of view is quite remote from that defined in our Methodist standards. That this divergence gains only incidental expression we have already pointed out; but we raise the question, whether the Church has anything to gain by unsettling the faith of its young preachers no matter whether this is done by an author's incidental remarks or by the open drive of his volume?

We turn now to our second item, namely, a similar incidental criticism of Dr. McGiffert's "Martin Luther the Man and His Work." We record our admiration of the author's brilliant and lucid style, but hasten to point out that his book is written from his own rationalistic point of view. McGiffert is well known as an outstanding teacher of

the "advanced" positions. Some startlingly divergent statements of his connected with the installation of Dean Beebe at Boston were mentioned in the *Christian Advocate* at the time. Dr. McGiffert is hostile toward Historic Christianity, and this attitude finds occasional expression in his discussion in his book on Luther and Reformation. Thus, he has a very inadequate treatment of Luther's spiritual struggles; he has no appreciation of Luther's great doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone, and to Luther's doctrine of the authority of the Bible he is openly opposed. The influence upon a reader of this book will certainly be toward the "advanced" positions, and away from those of Historic Christianity and of constitutional Methodism. However, had it not been for the very definite instruction of the General Conference of 1920, that every book must be in full and hearty accord with our constitutional standards, we would have overlooked the liberal undertone of this work. One other matter before closing this short reference to Dr. McGiffert's volume. Any reader who will examine this book side by side with Dr. Henry E. Jacob's life of Luther, will, we believe, share with us the opinion that the latter is in every way the stronger work. It gives a bigger Luther, it is more scholarly, it is more deeply religious, it is fuller and more detailed, it is devoted to Historic Christianity. (This certainly cannot be said of Dr. McGiffert's book). Why the Commission chose the rationalistic work of Dr. McGiffert when Dr. Jacobs and many other

strong and conservative works were available we utterly fail to understand, unless some one among them really wants to take every possible opportunity of prejudicing the minds of Methodism's younger ministry toward the rationalistic point of view.

The third of our three concluding items of criticism has to do with the selection of books dealing with Bible Introduction. All the books provided in this field assume or teach to some degree the modern critical view of Biblical origins. The student who does not read outside the books provided by the Commission will be likely to suppose that the "assured results" are really such. One cannot avoid the feeling that the commissioners have shown narrowness here. Are such men as James Orr, W. H. Green, Edouard Naville, A. H. Finn, M. G. Keil, J. H. Raven, J. W. McGarvey, Robert D. Wilson to be silenced unheard? One of the radical books offered by the Commission in this field was Professor A. S. Peake's Commentary on the Bible. It is very bald, and was taken out by the Bishops after some debate. The final vote was decisively against it, though we are informed that there were those in the board who favored it to the last. Some of the positions of this commentary Dr. Peake himself repudiated when the writer discussed them with him in London at the Ecumenical. And in defense of the presence of such radical material in his volume he said, the scholars who had labored with him to produce the commentary were men of such standing that it was necessary to give them

considerable latitude with respect to their views. We do not say this in criticism of Dr. Peake, but simply to show that Criticism is subjective; that it is not properly a science; that the "assured results" are not assured; that they are simply opinions. Methodism's definition of Scripture is practical rather than abstract. It is defined as God's word, the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice. This view is consistent with the opinion of its verbal inspiration, or with Professor Curtis' view that the Bible is varied in its origin, no one kind of inspiration explaining all of it. Methodism can thus be tolerant toward any conception of Scripture that preserves it as God's supernatural word, a real rule for faith and practice. There is not, therefore, of necessity, any quarrel between our Church's constitutional standards and Criticism. It depends upon what views Criticism holds, what opinions it advances; it depends upon the attitude of the particular critic toward the supernatural. But here is our point: the traditional opinion of Bible origins is as consistent with Methodist standards as is the view of Dr. Driver, for example. Why then is the traditional view denied a hearing in the Course of Study? Why is the older view, that has been maintained uninterruptedly through the present welter of opinions, and that is today finding new advocates, why is this view condemned to be unheard?

Our "liberal" friends boast of their devotion to freedom of thought, and liberty of opinion. We join with them heartily as re-

spects all matters not defined in our established standards. Within the great headlands of faith, there defined, we believe fully in freedom of thought and of teaching. But do they? Are they not constantly showing themselves to be narrow dogmatists? It is a common criticism of the "liberal" group that they never read any but the opinions of their own school. Thus Professor Fairhurst of Kentucky State University quotes Professor H. W. Conn of Wesleyan as asserting that scientists no longer discuss evolution; they regard "it as beyond discussion and accept it as a demonstrated conclusion." Yet Fairhurst himself rejects evolution; and Dennert of Halle says it is not science, it is creed; and Fleishmann of Erlangen takes like ground, or stronger; and Price asserts as a Geologist that his science furnished no evidence for evolution; and Professor Graebner has made a list of many more men of eminence in science who hold like positions. Evidently Professor Conn had not read any of these books. Another illustration of the biased attitude of those who claim to share "liberal" views occurred in a metropolitan preachers' meeting where these very matters were up. A motion had been made to hear a brother who stood for the conservative position at the close of the paper of the morning, which was from the rationalistic point of view. A prominent "liberal" in the meeting arose and said, "I am opposed to hearing him, we have had enough of those opinions already."

Now this is our criticism here, that the

Commission has shown just such a narrow and dogmatic attitude in the matter of the books they have selected in the field of Biblical Introduction. They have sought to prejudice all students of the Conference Courses in favor of the critical hypothesis, and have condemned conservative scholarship to remain unheard.

But concluding we record it as our lay opinion that the present critical views of the origin of the Bible will largely disappear with the certain collapse of Darwinian philosophy. Christianity is clearly supernatural and extraordinary; it is not a product of universal evolution but of supernatural divine interference. When, at some future day, it is possible for men to face the Biblical facts freed from their evolutionary creed, it will be found that the conservative opinions of such scholars as Orr, Green, Finn, Keil and the rest were much nearer to the truth.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### BOOKS THAT WILL HELP THE CHRISTIAN WHO WANTS TO RELATE HISTORIC CHRISTI- ANITY TO MODERN TRUTH.



AVING completed our criticism the next concern is to do something constructive. Among modern books those built upon the basis of evolutionary philosophy will doubtless outnumber others; but this does not say that there are not many books of first class worth both as to scholarship, science, and every other value written from the standpoint of Historic Christianity. There is nothing that the average Christian thinker needs more than to be put in touch with some of these works. Our plan is to select from our own reading a list of these books, and set them forth with some brief comments.

The book that we would place first in this list is Dr. John Alfred Faulkner's "Modernism and the Christian Faith." This work deals with Christianity out of a full consciousness of the modern point of view; and yet it perfectly preserves all the historic Christian values. Another volume by the same author that deserves wide reading is his, "Crises in the Early Church."

One of the great intellects of modern Christianity is James Orr, a teacher of broad scholarship and robust faith. All his books

are valuable, we would especially commend four: "The Problem of the Old Testament," which thoroughly canvasses the critical problems; "Christian View of God and the World," a most noble apologetic; "Sin as a Problem of Today," which relates the Christian doctrine of sin and the current philosophy of evolution; and "The Resurrection of Jesus."

James Denney's "The Reconciliation," is a thorough discussion of this great Christian field of truth. The book fully recognizes the double nature of Christ's reconciling work, as being at once Godward and manward. The putting does not seem to be quite as clear, nor quite as easy as Denney's earlier work, "The Death of Christ." In one important respect it is, however, more useful than the earlier work, namely, that it is written out of a full recognition of the modern objection to any influence of Christ's work Godward.

One of the greatest of modern works is, "The Christian Faith," by Olin Alfred Curtis. The book is more prophetic than argumentative. It does not try so much to prove Christianity as to state it and to relate it to the moral and spiritual consciousness of man. It is intellectually deep, but its passionate love for Christ and his Gospel makes it easy reading. No one can read it thoroughly without being a stronger Christian when it is finished.

Of Borden P. Bowen's books the greatest, from our point of view, is his "Metaphysics." His "Personalism" is, perhaps, a simpler putting of the same great ideas. Either of

these volumes will free the student from slavery to any form of naturalism. Both of them stand the infinite personality of Almighty God out in such intellectual clearness that every reader will realize that unfaith is more an effort of the will than is faith.

In sermonic literature, there is nothing superior to John Wesley and Charles G. Finney for directness and doctrinal clearness. For soaring mood John Henry Newman is unsurpassed.

Leaving the theological field, for a moment, we would like to commend George Allen Dinsmore's "The Atonement in Literature." This volume has the double value of introducing the reader to outstanding literary works, and also of showing how the principle of moral satisfaction runs through the centuries, whenever men of genius write.

A simple exposition of Christian faith is Henry W. Clarke's book, "Philosophy of Christian Experience." A simple exposition of the work of Christ is that by Carnegie Simpson entitled, "The Fact of Christ."

In the field in which science touches religion there are a number of outstanding conservative writers. In Geology we might mention George Frederick Wright and George McCready Price. Wright's Ice Age is of course standard. His "Scientific Confirmation of Old Testament History," is a most interesting book. Price's "New Light on the Doctrine of Creation," and his "The Fundamentals of Geology," are both strong. Alfred Fairhurst, for years a professor in Kentucky University, has written a number of books against the philosophy of evolution;

the most recent is, "Theistic Evolution;" it is thoroughly scientific, and remarkably clear. Dr. F. Bettex has written a number of larger and smaller works relating to science and Christianity; his, "Science and Christianity," published by the Book Concern in 1901, is still well worth reading. "The Six Days of Creation in the Light of Modern Science," was printed in 1916, and, "The Miracle" in 1918, these are most interesting works. R. K. Duncan, who writes in the field of chemistry, was a devout Christian. "The New Knowledge," from his pen is a fascinating work.

"The Philosophy of the Christian Religion," by Fairbairn; "Text Book of the History of Doctrine," by Reinhold Seeberg; "Fundamental Truths of Christianity," by Christian Ernst Luthardt, an old book but a great one; "New Archeological Discoveries," by Camden M. Coburn; Sir William M. Ramsay's great work, "Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament;" A. T. Robertson's, "Paul the Interpreter of Christ;" Professor J. Gresham's work on the same question, entitled, "The Origin of Paul's Religion" are all works that will strengthen faith.

As an answer to the various destructive opinions concerning the person of Jesus, Professor Frederich Loofs, "What is the Truth about Jesus Christ?" is well worth reading. We do not commend his own final position. A fine recent believing life of Christ is that written by G. Robinson Lees. One very attractive feature of this book is its sixty-three full page illustrations, repro-

duced from scenes modeled in wax by the celebrated Italian sculptor, D. Mastroianni. "The Christ We Forget," by P. Whitwell Wilson, is devout, believing, and suggestive.

Theodore Zahn's "Introduction to the New Testament" is quoted as a book of great scholarship; we do not have it. Robert Dick Wilson's "Studies in the Book of Daniel" meets the critical arguments with great skill. Professor John H. Raven's "Old Testament Introduction" is a book of thorough learning. Professor D. A. Hayes in "John and His Writings" accepts the apostolic authorship of both the Gospel, epistles, and Apocalypse. A one-volume commentary that is highly recommended is the new edition of Jamieson, Fausset and Brown; we have not seen it.

Some miscellaneous books that deserve mention are: "Twice Born Men," by Begbie; "Every Church Its Own Evangelist," by Loren M. Edwards; "What is New Theology," by Professor John Paul, a very fine, moderate, clear statement of the issues involved. Bishop Neely's "Doctrinal Standards of Methodism" should have a place in every Methodist's library. "The Divinity of our Lord," by Canon Parry Liddon is a sublime book. P. T. Forsythe writes strongly and always from the point of view of Historic Christianity. The best book that we have read on the subject of Religious Education is Professor Theodore Schmauk's "How to Teach in the Sunday School." This volume makes Christianity centre in Justification, which is the decisive test of the value of any opinion from the Christian

point of view. Two strong, scientific works against Darwinism are: "At the Deathbed of Darwinism," by Dennert, and "Evolution," by Theodore Graebner. A most valuable commentary on John's Gospel is that by Theodore Godet, of Neuchatel. It is thirty years old, but it is a masterpiece of learning and spiritual appreciation. "The Protestant Church in Germany," by George H. Schodde, is an illuminating and interesting book. Perhaps we should mention Orr's treatment of the virgin birth of Jesus, and Dale's "The Atonement." Orr's handling of the first is masterly, and Dale's conception will be a tonic to the reader's moral consciousness. Doubtless he will need to spiritualize Dale's views; but the book will be an antidote for the moral superficiality of many current opinions.

The book reviews of Professor Keyser, of the Lutheran Church, are most valuable, they can be found in the *Bible Champion*. Professor Keyser holds the chair of Systematic Theology in the Wittenburg Seminary at Springfield, Ohio. He is a thorough scholar, a wide reader, and a clear writer. His own volume, "Contending for the Faith," is highly spoken of. It is published by George H. Doran Company, New York. The book anouncements indicate a decided reaction toward historic truths. The fact is the radical opinions were never as influential as they claimed to be. The great Lutheran bodies in America have never been affected by them. The leaders of American Lutheranism largely read German; they are familiar with the destructive opinions of their

native universities; but they are familiar also with the answers to those opinions. The result is that Lutheranism is refusing radical opinions and is standing strongly by the great Reformation and Christian principles. It is said that Harnack's "What is Christianity?" provoked a thousand replies, many by outstanding conservative scholars of Europe; but how many of these replies have been translated? Men like Harry Emerson Fosdick tell us that it is "liberal" Christianity or intellectual suicide, and doubtless he was sincere when he said this; but his opinion is manifestly biased and poorly thought through. There is no fundamental truth of Historic Christianity that need be surrendered. Science has no facts that can contradict the fact of Christ and salvation. In every age since Christ, and to the present time Historic Christianity is holding the allegiance of many of the world's first intellects. They have written and are writing their investigations and their conclusions; and the humble heart that wants still the all-sufficient Christ of the centuries can find books to help faith. After all whether a man is a rationalist or a believer depends upon the heart more than upon the head. Pride and self-sufficiency will find encouragement and a certain superficial attractiveness in the new currents. Humbled hearts that know life's defeats, its struggles and its sins will still turn to the precious truths of yesterday, and will still cry with the ages gone,

"Thou O Christ art all I want,  
More than all in Thee I find."

## CAPTER XVII.

### DARWINISM A CREED.



HE great dominating idea of the present age is evolution. The assumed truth of evolution is far more than half of the argument for all radical Biblical criticism. Many of the facts of the anthropologist are the creations of his imagination simply, having no other foundation than his acceptance of the evolutionary hypothesis. The science of Geology is very largely built upon the assumed truth of this hypothesis. Professor George Schodde says that the thinking of the present is built upon the hypothesis of evolution, and is dominated by that hypothesis just as Hegelian philosophy dominated the historical criticism of Bauer, and as Kant's philosophical analysis lay behind the opinions of the earlier rationalism. In America the hypothesis of evolution has become in certain circles a sort of twentieth century orthodoxy that a man must accept or else be ostracized from the company of intellectuals. The tremendous vogue of this hypothesis is very much more generally recognized than its content and worth is understood; very many more people know that the evolutionary hypothesis is true than know what this or any hypothesis is. Imagine yourself to be standing on the top of a mountain at the head of a mountain

road, and looking abroad over the country. Below you in the valley you notice a fine road stretching away toward a city that you can just see on the horizon. You wonder whether the mountain road at the head of which you stand is the same as that valley road, whether, if it is not, there is some connection between them, or if some stream or difficult bog may lie between to prevent you from getting over on the turnpike. All three of these ideas are possible, and so you look around you for some surface indications to tell you which may probably be true. You do not find very much to help you but you finally decide to work upon the idea that your mountain road is continuous with the valley turnpike. In other words you choose that possibility as your working hypothesis and go ahead to test it out.

This is precisely the hypothesis of evolution. It is a scientist's chosen opinion adopted as a working theory, thus:—The fact of creation is before us; where did it originate? There are several possibilities. The Christian religion affirms that God, the supreme intelligence and almighty will, created it. In this hypothesis there is a full recognition of the orderliness of God's thought and will, and that the vast order and forces of nature reveal the presence of the God who, under law, makes the day night and the night day; but beyond this order God towers transcendent, still working according to his infinite wisdom and almighty will. This is the Christian hypothesis. Then there is the hypothesis of theistic evolution: the belief that

God's will and wisdom produced certain great laws and forces that are ever flowing from his will as rivers from their springs; and that the interaction of these forces produces all the complex universe that is about us. With this vast interaction of forces God does not interfere; he simply pours them forth. It is a struggle of forces, and survival of the fittest. If there is an earthquake here or a pestilence there God does not either cause it or hinder it; he simply watches the interplay of forces that flow from his will in uninterrupted monotony. This is the hypothesis of the liberal wing in theology, and the whole group of those who are timid toward the supernatural. Then there is the hypothesis of the Atheist, who denies the divine personality and is satisfied to start his thinking with laws and forces.

In all this the important thing from the Christian point of view is to realize that each of these hypotheses has an equal scientific value. No one of them is anything but a chosen belief, a creed; and a scientific creed has no more intellectual value than a religious creed; indeed, not as much: for the religious creed has additional tests that no scientific creed has any right with. A scientific creed is an hypothesis laid down to be tested by facts and facts only. A religious creed is an hypothesis laid down to be tested by facts, and also by its appeal to the whole emotional, moral and spiritual sensibilities of man. And, after all, is not the moral test the supreme test of truth? Can one ever be quite so sure of anything as he is that ever-

lasting righteousness must stand unblemished? We have no doubt that the sun will rise tomorrow; but the world might end tonight. But one's faith in the certainty of everlasting righteousness cannot fail. The universe itself becomes vacant and meaningless if this should fail. And so if there is any truth at all we are never quite so certain we possess it as when we can see that the principle or belief in question is necessary to our moral natures. And so we conclude that a scientific hypothesis, or creed, is not more dependable than a religious; that, indeed, the weight of probability is the other way.

Every one knows that evolution was originally an hypothesis. Darwin did not think of it as more than that. Wallace, who stood beside Darwin in developing the idea admitted breaks in the evolutionary unfolding. Huxley, who was also a co-laborer, insisted that evolution must include large leaps; that the idea of infinitesimal variation and slow ascent could not be fitted to the facts. The intermediate forms were not being discovered. The idea of a missing link between man and the ape is common knowledge; what was equally true, but is not so well known is that the links were missing all up and down the scale of life. It is about half a century since Darwin's brilliant suggestion; the habitable globe has been searched for the intermediate species; but they have not been found, and evolution, as a general hypothesis to explain the origin of the manifold forms of life from an original cell, is still an unproven hypothesis, a creed and no more.

The fact is that Darwinism is not only unproved, but there is an increasing array of facts against it. Every careful reader knows that there are numerous authorities to substantiate these facts:—

1. That highly complex forms often appear early in a given series.
2. That there is a wide and unbridged chasm between man and the lower animals. The poorest skulls known are not worse than some modern skulls, and the Cro Magnon man, who stands quite early in the series had a larger cranial capacity than the average modern man by more than a hundred cubic centimeters.
3. Disease germs, which during the period of recorded history have passed through innumerable generations, produced in ancient times the same symptoms as now. Evidently there can have been but little if any change here in millions of generations.
4. Cross fertilization results in sterility. Does not this fact argue powerfully for the distinctness and fixity of species? If forms had risen out of each other by infinitesimal change would we not rather expect to find cross fertility?
5. Highly developed varieties within a given species can only be maintained by careful breeding. Sexual selection and the survival of the fittest do not seem to preserve them when once the directing hand of man is withdrawn. Instead there seems to be a tendency toward promiscuous breeding and the loss of specialized characteristics.
6. Many complex organs, such as the eye

or the electrical organs of certain fish, would be of no vestige of use in their rudimentary stages. This being the case they could not help their possessors to survive in the struggle for existence.

7. The process of development underwent a complete change at the appearance of life. Before this development was downward, katagenetic. Since life there are two processes going on: the katagenetic in inorganic nature, and the anagenetic in organic. Life must be an outside principle that forces development upward against the trend of all inorganic nature. In death the downward trend of the inorganic triumphs over the upward push of life. It is hard to see how the downward movement of the organic could produce the upward pushing organic. And it is perfectly apparent that the term evolution is thus used for directly opposite ideas in geology and in biology.

8. Similarly at the appearance of man with his moral and spiritual faculties and his intuitive infinities. If the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest has meaning below this level, it loses all meaning here. But here is a striking contradiction: grim struggle produces spiritual infinities that abhor struggle. If Darwinism is anywhere near true God must love a contradiction. Here is another incidental item:—If man's moral and spiritual infinities are a by-product of physical struggle, they are mere phenomenon without authority, and man cannot afford to trust them. Darwinism thus sacrifices all that is noblest in man.

Our gift for inconsistency alone enables us to continue the bluff of thinking after we have hypothecated away all basis for confidence in our thinking powers.

10. Experimental science cannot substantiate the idea that acquired traits are inherited.

This list of facts against which the Darwinian must hold his creed is by no means exhaustive, but it is enough for illustration; and both in Europe and America such facts are telling powerfully against the hypothesis. Professor E. Dennert of Halle has written a most interesting book against it, entitled, "At the Deathbed of Darwinism." It is a collation of opinions adverse to Darwin by leading scientists of Europe. In some instances the quotations are from addresses read before university circles. Professor Dennert makes out an exceedingly strong case. His conclusion is that Darwinism is not science, that it never was. That it has never been more than a chosen belief. For himself he says that he still believes in some undefined form of the doctrine of descent, but that he holds this, even, simply as a scientific creed. But Darwinism with its infinitesimal fortuitous variation, its struggle for existence and its survival of the fittest must be entirely abandoned.

Professor George McCready Price, of California takes a similar position. He has written two most interesting books dealing with the subject. One is "New Light on the Doctrine of Creation," and the other, "The Fundamentals of Geology." Professor Al-

fred Fairhurst, who has just passed into the beyond, and who taught in the University of Kentucky, has several works that take this position. His latest is "Theistic Evolution," published in 1919.

Professor Theodore Graebner is not a scientist by profession, but a professor of Theology at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis; he has, however, made a thorough investigation of Darwinism. If his theological connections are to be counted against him we must insist that they be counted equally against Mendel, who was a Roman Catholic monk; yet Mendel's evolutionary conclusions are among the most important advance steps taken in this matter in the century. Some other authorities whose scientific verdict in this field is negative will include Dr. Ethridge of the British Museum, who says, "In all this great museum there is not a particle of evidence of transmutation of species. Nine-tenths of the talk of evolutionists is sheer nonsense, not founded on observation, and wholly unsupported by facts." Professor Owen declares that "no instance of the change of one species into another has ever been recorded by man." Professor Joseph LeConte of the University of California, writes in his book, "Religion and Science": "The evidence of Geology today is that species seem to come in suddenly and in full perfection, remain substantially unchanged during the term of their existence, and pass away in full perfection. Other species take their places apparently by substitution, not by transmutation."

These are a few of the authorities mentioned by Professor Graebner. Fairhurst mentions numbers more. We will cull a few from the many in his pages. Thus: St. George Mivart of University College, Kensington says that Darwinism is a "puerile hypothesis;" Goette of Strasburg, says Darwinism has passed into its last stage, that of abandonment; Zoeckler of the University of Greifswald, says: "The claim that the hypothesis of descent is secured scientifically must most decidedly be denied;" Wilhelm Wundt, of Leipsic, who stands at the forefront of German psychologists, speaks of his early espousal of evolution as the crime of his youth; Lionel S. Beale, of King's College, London, rejects the theory, and asserts that "man is man from the earliest period of his existence as a structureless germ. . . . In support of all naturalistic conjectures concerning man's origin, there is not at this time a shadow of scientific evidence."

Recently the doctrine of evolution was struck a severe blow by one of its adherents, Professor Bateson, of England, who spoke before the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Toronto last December. He is faithful to evolution as an hypothesis, but admits that the case is by no means proved. Another severe blow was struck against the doctrine when Hugh Von Hertwig, the celebrated Berlin Anatomist, cut from under it one of its chief foundations, the law of Biogenesis, or of the recapitulation of the stages of evolution in the embryo. He says: "Ontogenetic stages there-

fore give us only a greatly changed picture of the philogenetic stages as they may once have existed in primitive ages, but do not correspond to them in their actual content." (Dennert, *at Deathbed of Darwinism*, p. 144).

Professor Fleischmann, of Erlangen, has a volume now almost twenty years old in which he discusses the doctrine of descent and comes to this opinion: "After long and careful investigation I have come to the conclusion that the doctrine of Descent has not been substantiated. I go even further and maintain that the discussion of the question does not belong to the field of the exact sciences of zoology and botany." (Dennert, *lib. cit.*, p. 124.)

And now gathering up our argument. We did not start out to disprove either Darwinism as a particular form of the doctrine of Descent, or the more general doctrine; but simply to prove that which ever position is held, and by whomsoever it is held, it is held not as science, but as creed. A scientific hypothesis is like a creed in that it is something believed rather than something known; there is however this difference between them: that a creed is something that is for some personal reasons precious, and that is held to strenuously, whereas an hypothesis is loosely held, and easily surrendered when supporting data fail. Darwinism was an hypothesis; it has ceased to be an hypothesis and has become a creed. Men hold it today for devotion regardless of facts. It is a religion—the religion of man's intellectual self-sufficiency.

Right here there is a matter a little aside that should receive passing notice. We want to express the judgment that it is time the careless statements, and over statements of Darwinian zealots were discontinued. If an author wants to say that he believes man has been on the planet for from two to five hundred thousand years, and that he believes he probably had for many centuries a mind about the equal of a two-year-old infant, there is no objection; but, there being no evidence to support such beliefs, there is great objection to passing such statements for scientific conclusions. Professor Fairhurst, in his "Theistic Evolution," has very appropriately entered his emphatic protest against certain scientists, in the less exact science such as pedagogy and sociology, dogmatizing with respect to these matters upon which true science is hesitating and uncertain.

But coming now to our conclusion. If evolution wants a place among the creeds of men it must submit to the tests applied to creeds. The final test of any creed is its appeal to the soul, its power to satisfy the moral and spiritual intuitions of men. Evolution is valuable as a means of simplifying, for the superficial thinker, the problem of being. Firemist and protoplasm and a vast order of force and law may be easier to conceive than God the infinite mind; but which view is most valuable for the soul? Which lends itself better to the human instinct for prayer? The supreme test of creeds is their worth for founding moral and spiritual life. Remember there are no facts to establish evolution;

it stands today in the intellectual world simply as a creed. What then is its value as tested by the criteria by which men test creeds?

There can be no question, by this test evolution fails. The soul of man needs a universe that is rich in the personal responsiveness of God; a universe in which God reacts upon us as friend with friend. The tendency of evolution is all away from this. It shuts God out or in, whichever you may prefer to say, behind a wall of force and law. He willed and wills certain great forces and laws and all action and progress is the interaction of these. To say that these very laws are God does not help the matter at all. The whole universe might be singing one ceaseless song of love, and yet to the needy soul athirst for the personal response of God it would be as worthless as a phonograph record. It is not the God who loves universally that can satisfy the soul athirst, but the God who reacts to his cry and makes him know he loves him. If one modifies his evolutionary creed away from naturalism until evolution means only an order which the personal will of God observed in creating, then there is room for the divine transcendent personality, and prayer and the supernatural come back again, and the soul of man is satisfied; but such an evolution would have no value to the naturalist. What the naturalist wants is to get rid of the transcendent mind and will of God; what religion must have is these brought near. Evolution is easily fitted to materialism or to pantheism, but it has

no affinity with theism. The evolutionary God felt and thought once, before creation; since then he only wills. He is frozen, he is crystallized, he cannot remain personal; theistic evolutionists are bound to advance into pantheism, or else to surrender their naturalism for a doctrine more in harmony with theism.

There may be, there certainly is, an ascending order in creation, and there are forces and laws, and God is in these, and Christians always have believed that he is. But these things do not comprehend him; he transcends them; he towers above them and responds to Elijah's prayer with a flash of lightning that starts anew in the divine heart and thought whence all things rose in the beginning. In Christianity the ultimate unchangeable is not nature but righteousness. Natural law is but a symbol of the eternal holiness of God. Holiness towers above it as the mountains above the plains; and when for the purpose of holiness there is need for a burning bush, a virgin birth, or a broken tomb, holy omnipotent personality wills them as in the beginning when God said, let there be, and it was.

Whatever creed a man holds he holds by choice, whether he calls it science, philosophy or religion. Being under the necessity, then, of choosing, we choose with the Christian centuries. We believe in creation, in the fall of man, and in the great divine redemption that God has increasingly revealed across the centuries. In it stand patriarchs, priests, kings, prophets; men whose hearts

and minds were empowered for a divine and wondrous purpose; a purpose not for themselves alone but for us all. We believe that this increasing revelation God brought to its climax in Jesus, the eternal Son, who for us men and for our sins was made man through the womb of the Virgin. We believe that the apostles were inspired, supernaturally empowered by the Holy Ghost, to preserve to us the record of this wondrous Incarnation and the Gospel that is implicit in it. We believe that the same Spirit still dwells in the Church to illumine us and to lead us within the once-for-all given truth. We believe that even the faintly whispered prayers of men are answered by the infinite God, who fills all and transcends all; and that he answers as of old, sometimes with lightnings, and sometimes with whispered breathings that come to us like voices of gentle stillness. This is our chosen creed. Behind it are a multitude of facts. Against it no single fact can be arrayed. In addition it satisfies the soul of man in all of its sublime longings. It is fitted to conscience. It is fitted to the instinct for prayer. It is warm with personality. It is sublime with an infinite responsiveness. This is our choice. If another can find more comfort and more sublimity in evolution let him choose that; but if he would still remain a Christian let him remember to hold his creed of evolution within the limits laid down by his Christian creed.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### IN CONCLUSION.



HE careful student of human affairs soon becomes conscious of the fact that balance is one of the chief practical questions.

The Roman Church stressed authority and tradition and lost the great Christian realities under an accumulation of superstition. The "liberal" wing of modern Protestantism is stressing personal liberty, and is losing the great Christian realities in a riot of opinions. Certainly there must be some middle ground between these two positions that will be free enough to keep faith vital and yet authoritative enough to keep it Christian. To find this ground and to maintain it with high devotion is a supreme need in our Protestantism today.

It is always true that the letter killeth, and that the Spirit giveth life. It is also true that the Spirit uses every measure of truth to bless the hearts of men and to lift them into some relationship with God. He did something for man in the Old Testament days through that incomplete revelation. He is doing something for men today through the equally incomplete views of the modern Unitarian, but he can only do his supreme work in relation to the whole rich Gospel which he revealed to man in Christ through the apostles. From generation to generation

these great truths have been passed on. They have come to us. It is our supreme obligation to preserve them and pass them on. Liberty of opinion, too extreme, will lose them in a riot of subjectivities. Elaborateness of definition and an extreme traditionalism will lose them also. The Church must find the middle ground that will be free enough to give room for life, and yet authoritative enough to preserve the sublime Gospel realities which we have received from the past through the apostles,—the Gospel of God incarnate, dying and rising again, the all-sufficient Savior of lost men.

And this which is our great need is just what we have in the constitution of the American Methodist Church. Methodism does not have an elaborate body of authoritative doctrine. It has a few exact definitions of the great headlands of faith in its articles of Religion. It has also Mr. Wesley's standard sermons and his notes on the New Testament.

The Articles of Religion are careful formularies that define the chief truths of our common Christianity. The sermons and notes are not formularies; and as standards of belief in Methodism their value must of course be in their doctrinal drive, in their general Christian bearing, rather than in minute illustrative details. The doctrinal positions thus defined and established in Methodism might be summarized as follows:

1. The Holy Trinity.
2. The incarnation of the eternal Son.
3. That he was born of the Virgin.

4. That he suffered to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice for all sin.
5. That he took again his body on the third day.
6. That he ascended into heaven and will come again at the last day to judge all men.
7. The Holy Ghost.
8. The Holy Scriptures as the rule of faith and practice.
9. The fall of man, and his resulting state of racial depravity.
10. Justification by faith alone.
11. The relation of good works to Christian life, as a fruit of faith, and not a basis of salvation.
12. Regeneration.
13. Christian Perfection.
14. The meaning and value of the sacraments.
15. That the death of Christ stands as a redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all sin.
16. The freedom of the will.
17. The witness of the Spirit.

These definitions are not in minute detail. They define simply the central New Testament facts. They leave wide room for personal opinion and speculative details, thus:

1. There is no detailed philosophy of the Trinity or of the Incarnation; but the triunity of God and the real incarnation of the eternal Son are asserted.
2. There is no theory of the atonement; but that Christ's death has an ethical value

to divine holiness that makes forgiveness possible is defined.

3. The issues raised in much modern discussion of the Second Coming of Christ are not treated; but the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the world as judge of all men is taught.

4. There is no theory of inspiration; but the practical authority of the Scriptures as the rule of faith and practice is proclaimed.

5. That man is utterly, abjectly bad is not taught; but that he sinned, fell, and is morally and spiritually abnormal, needing a great supernatural salvation, is asserted.

6. The great central doctrine of Christianity, Justification by Faith Alone, is clearly taught; and the relation of good works as a fruit, rather than a condition of salvation is emphasized.

But returning, the central New Testament facts listed above about cover the doctrinal establishment of Methodism. They determine Methodism as a part of the common Christianity of the centuries; and yet they leave wide room for speculation, for liberty of opinion, and for restatements of the truth. To preserve, then, this Methodism's historic doctrinal foundation is a chief task of our generation: for Christianity, and all that Christianity means to us as a civilization, and as a solace and victory before the great life problems of sin, suffering, age, and death, it means because of this historic content. The philosophical principle of love is indeed the fullness of law; but the philosophy of love is not a gospel for sinful, guilty,

lost men. It is Incarnate Deity crucified for our sins and raised for our justification who is the power of God unto salvation through faith. The ethic of love is indeed a great advance over the ethic of power; but the hope of the world is the Christian gospel: 'Christ in you the hope of glory.' The Church cannot afford to sacrifice her Gospel for anything, not even for something so noble as some chief part of it. We must pass on the whole Gospel that we received from our fathers to our children and our children's children.

It is because, as we firmly believe, the Course of Study provided for the training of our ministry, and to a less degree the ideas taught in some of our Church schools are making this exceedingly difficult that this discussion has been projected. It has doubtless caused some brethren pain, which we regret deeply; but the common Christianity of the ages is something more sacred and precious even than a brother's feelings. We have charged no man with heresy, we have not even thought the word. We have simply affirmed, and have tried to show why we have affirmed it, that certain books are defective from the standpoint of Methodism and of Historic Christianity.

In each one, and often, in several of these books, we have found one or more of the great doctrines of our Church undermined or rejected, until nearly everyone of our great historic positions have been set aside. That the whole situation may be clear before us let us summarize the divergent teachings

of these books we have been criticising. In considering this summary it will need to be remembered that in several instances the particular divergences appear only in one volume; but often, too, they appear in several. For example, the rejection of Justification by Faith is common to most of these books. But here is the summary of their collective divergence:

1. They teach that man is a gradual evolution from the beast not only in body, but also in his moral powers, thus rejecting the doctrine of the fall, and with it the whole occasion for redemption.
2. They regard man's sinful tendency, not as a racial depravity, but as an incomplete evolution, a bestial inheritance and no more.
3. They deny supernatural prevision in the prophets of Israel, and specifically deny any suffering Messiah in the Old Testament.
4. They belittle the historic foundations of faith in the virgin birth of Jesus.
5. They make Jesus an errant personality whose teachings and doctrines are repeatedly unreliable, thus:

He did not at first understand his mission and supposed himself called to renew the old Theocracy in Palestine. When he failed in this he determined to go up to Jerusalem to bear testimony there. He clearly foresaw the great probability that this act would cause his death; he surrendered to such a possibility; but the cross was never more to him than this; it was never to him a redemptive task, a great divine purpose.

Again, he expected suddenly to return and establish his kingdom during the life time of the men who had crucified him; but he was mistaken in this also. And, once again, he either accommodated himself to, or was deceived by a Persian idea of demon possession. This is the size of the Christ offered to us by several of the books. This "liberal" Christ is indeed a small figure compared with the Christ of the New Testament and of the historic creeds.

6. They undermine the foundations of faith in his resurrection. They regard the various accounts as irreconcilable; Luke and Paul have quite a different idea of the event. Walker's volume goes even further and sets aside the historic fact of the resurrection altogether. It did not occur; how the disciples ever came to believe in it is a major historical problem.

7. They reject not only the infallibility of the New Testament, but even its historical reliability. The evangelists are charged with having unconsciously written into its text ideas of their own, which they mistakenly assigned to Jesus. John's Gospel is deprived of nearly all historical value; it is a product of several different forces, including the influence of Paul's ideas.

8. Jesus did not die to make atonement for sin. This New Testament teaching is definitely and repeatedly denied by several authors.

9. Justification by faith in Christ's great redemptive achievement and personality is rejected by some of the authors, disregarded

by others, and a new way of salvation apart from justifying faith is offered to the Church.

10. Supernatural regeneration is weakened down or entirely rejected by a number of authors.

11. They reject the Second Coming of Christ.

12. They set up the subjective consciousness of the individual as the final authority for faith and practice instead of the Bible.

13. They make Historic Christianity a composite of many influences, including pagan philosophy and politics, instead of the authoritative teaching of Christ through his disciples.

14. They belittle the great Christian creeds as outworn formulae no longer acceptable to intelligent men.

15. They put in place of the soul's immediate contact with God, in prayer, and even at the solemn moment of death, mere flashes from the sub-conscious mind, and pathological influences.

16. They reduce sublime rich abounding Christianity to a simple ethical discipline, a philosophy. Jesus, God or man, is only a philosopher who taught that love is the one great truth in heaven and on earth.

This in hasty summary is the collective teaching of these books. They negative or undermine nearly everyone of the great doctrines established in Methodism. Of course, not all of the books do all of these things; but in a course of study provided to introduce young ministers to Christian theology,

and to ground them in Methodist truth no book should do any of these things. The law of the Church says that 'all books must be in full and hearty accord with those doctrines and that outline of faith established in the constitution.' No fully informed man can for a moment believe that these books which we have criticised fulfill this requirement.

The full consequences of the present situation will not be felt immediately. The religious and social consequences of theological and philosophical ideas are slow in developing. The man whose Christian emotions and confidences were formed under older ideas will often keep the emotion and the confidence after he has surrendered the ideas; but his children will not. Selmer grew up in the bosom of Christian faith. In maturity he surrendered his Christian beliefs and became a rationalist. His disciple, Bahrdt, grew up under Selmer's rationalistic ideas and never knew the wonder and power of Christian belief. Selmer remained a Christian in character to the end. Bahrdt never became a Christian, and died a spiritual and moral outcast.

The full result of this hesitating, and often antagonistic attitude which we are inculcating toward the virgin birth of Jesus, toward his resurrection and second coming, toward the propitiation of his cross, and all those great related Christian beliefs will not be apparent until a generation has grown up under the influence of the weakened views. The young men who are being trained in this present rationalistic course may be able to keep their Christian experience in spite of it,

for they grew to manhood under more vital preaching than that which they are being prepared to express; but it will be vastly different with the generation that must grow up under the weakened views now being inculcated. In practical salvation pressure these views do not differ from Unitarianism, and we have every reason to expect that their fruitage will be the same. A Christ whose only ministry is that of teacher and exemplar gains little additional power by the affirmation of metaphysical deity concerning him. The deity of Christ is a redemptive truth, and the affirmation of deity loses its significance when the redemptive truth is surrendered. As an example and a teacher Jesus would gain power rather than lose it by dropping the doctrine of his deity. If his power to save us were just his power to inspire us by his example then it is apparent that his equality with us as man and only man would be a more useful idea than that of his superiority as God and man. It is Christ as redeemer and regenerator whom we must think of as God. The "liberal" theology has no real need for the Incarnation, for its gospel, its program of salvation is Unitarian.

Had not Athanasius saved the primitive Church from Arius and his created Christ, Christianity would have been lost just as Gnosticism was. And as to Selmer, the latest fruitage of his rationalism has been bitter to us all in Nietzsche and the world war.

The claim that is often made by "liberals," that they are compelled to adopt their weakened views by science and scholarship, is due

either to superficiality on the part of the claimant, or to personal arrogance. One does not need to make any apology for keeping intellectual company with Zahn and Seeberg, with Orr and Denney, with Schmauk and Keyser, with Faulkner and Curtis, and Robertson.

Since the world began man has chosen the ultimate principles of philosophy that are to underlie his thinking, and he is still choosing them. He chooses here just as really as he does in selecting the mother of his children. If a man chooses Darwinism, or some modified form of Darwinism, that is, some uniformitarian conception which makes the supernatural undesirable, then he will be a "liberal" in theology and ultimately he will be a Unitarian. And if he has intellectual penetration enough to feel the consequences of his system he is likely to go on into Pantheism and Pessimism. But that upon which this whole thought development rests down ultimately is not scientific demonstration, but a personally chosen creed.

It is time we all realized that creeds are not exclusively a religious asset. Creeds underlie all life. They are the deep basis of all thought and all action, both in religion, in social life and in science.

The modern conflict in the Church is not at all between science and faith. It is rather between faiths. Between the faith of Christ and his sublime supernatural, and the faith of evolution and the anti-supernatural. (We do not mean to say that all evolutionary ideas are of necessity anti-supernatural; but we do mean to say that evolution as a philo-

sophical creed underlying current "liberal" theology is anti-supernatural and, therefore, anti-Christian.)

It would hardly seem necessary to point out that within the Christian Church the Christian creed alone has right. Sin makes the battle of faith hard enough without any allies. The forces devoted to the promotion of faith cannot in fairness lend themselves to its obstruction. We question no man's sincerity; but we insist upon the right of our children to hear proclaimed within the Church the same great supernatural faith that we received from our fathers: we insist upon the right of our children to grow up under the influence of those same precious and full-orbed Christian beliefs that have been the strength and solace of our own lives.

Two closing words:—First we would point out that the penetration of Methodism by the "liberal" theology is sufficiently developed to be a cause for concern. Take half a dozen facts out of many.

1. There were several men in the last General Conference who were outspokenly antagonistic to the body of belief defined in our Articles of Religion.

2. An appeal was made on the floor of the General Conference not to fetter the Church by insisting upon the authority of our standards.

3. The boast was made by certain brethren that the decision of the Judiciary Committee in "The only one condition" controversy would make of Methodism the one great creedless church in America.

4. The commission on Courses of Study have in two quadrenniums failed to produce a course of study in harmony with our defined positions.

5. Our Church ritual, by the revision of nineteen hundred and sixteen, was seriously modified away from its Christian definiteness toward the "liberal" views. But for the fine corrective work done by the Board of Bishops this "liberalizing" drift in the ritual would now be more apparent. (See Bishop Neely's discussion in his volume, "The Revised Ritual of 1916.")

6. A prominent minister said to the writer at the end of a debate upon these matters, in substance the following: "I agree with you entirely as to the present drift in theology. But I am in sympathy with it. We must get rid of the word Atonement. It is unfortunate that we ever used it. Indeed, the influence of Paul's epistles must be regarded as having been in some ways a real catastrophe." The writer replied, asking: "Do you mean to develop a new Christianity different from St. Paul's, and different from that which has been taught in the Christian centuries?" He replied: "Yes we do, we mean to return to the Christianity of the second century."

On the same day, during the debate, another minister said in substance the following, which was written down immediately: "Annual Conferences are asserting that the new Course of Study represents a drift toward Unitarianism. We admit it. But we look upon a refined Unitarianism as the fusion point of the future between Christiani-

ty and Judaism." Such remarks require no comment; the serious thing is that they are as common as they are.

The other closing word is a suggestion as to what can be done. We offer three ideas; not, however, as a thought-out program, but as suggestions for consideration.

1. Would it not be well for the General Conference to re-affirm the binding authority of our doctrinal standards? Certainly the General Conference has no authority in this relation; but when an unauthoritative rejection of the standards is current, such an unauthoritative affirmation of them would be most useful.

2. Would it not be well for the General Conference to assume direct control of its Courses of Study? It might be practical to have the report of the Commission made to the Church at large at least a year in advance of the General Conference, and formally considered, amended and adopted there. In our Board of Bishops we have the greatest confidence. There may be some individuals among them who sympathize with the current rationalistic tendencies, there are a number of facts that would point this way; but the Board as such is thoroughly faithful to the great common Christian and Methodist heritage. Nevertheless the Board of Bishops have twice failed to check up the errors of the Commission, and the Conference Course of Study has twice come through their hands containing quantities of rationalistic and anti-Christian opinion. There can be only one explanation of this, it is that the Bishops, overburdened as they are with

a great mass of supervisory detail, do not have time carefully to review a hundred or so books and properly to take care of this supremely important matter.

3. Would it not be well for the General Conference to reserve to itself the right of approval in the matter of the personnel of the Commission?

There are some men, who, when questions like these which we have been discussing in this volume are raised, instantly cry: "To the courts of the Church! Let us proceed judicially!" May we say that some who cry this are "liberals" trying thus to avoid the necessity of a candid and sincere discussion. They know that in a fair discussion of the facts they have no chance; but feel that in the courts of the Church the modern man's proper aversion to heresy trials would be a protection. And some are evangelicals who do not sufficiently understand the tremendous thought confusion of our times. But, whatever is the motive behind this cry, it is, in our judgment, both unfair and unwise. Once again we point out that there is a wide difference between asserting that a certain book is divergent from the point of view of Methodist standards, and asserting that a man is heretical. A man may be personally Christian and intellectually confused. A Christian brother may feel under obligation to do his utmost to protect his generation against such confused and divergent teachings without ever approaching the idea of legal procedure.

The Church is passing, today, through a great intellectual crisis. It must think its

way through. We need large charity, large patience, and a firm emphasis upon our established standards. Modern divergent ideas are not always recognized as such by those who hold them. This divergence must be defined and answered. If we could choose a general policy, this would be our program for this crisis:

Let us keep our courses of study in full and hearty accord with our established standards. Let us insist upon it that the young men who are coming into our ministry are taught the beliefs of our historic Methodism. Let us see to it that in every seminary there is a chair that stands aggressively for the preservation of the great Christian deposit, and for the maintainance of correct intellectual relations between this deposit and the currents and beliefs of an age's thinking. Let us try to keep in the editorial leadership of the Church and in its great directive offices men of deep thought, broad charity, and positive devotion to the great historic truths of Methodism and of Christianity. And then let us face the crisis of our times with sure confidence that Historic Christianity, the Christianity of our fathers, the common Christianity that we believe the Incarnate Son of God gave to his apostles, once for all, will, in the open field of free discussion, be able to maintain its age old supremacy.

Faith of our fathers! living still  
In spite of dungeon, fire and sword:  
Faith of our fathers! holy faith!  
We will be true to thee till death.



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